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THE MOST WRECKED PEOPLE —Mark Steyn

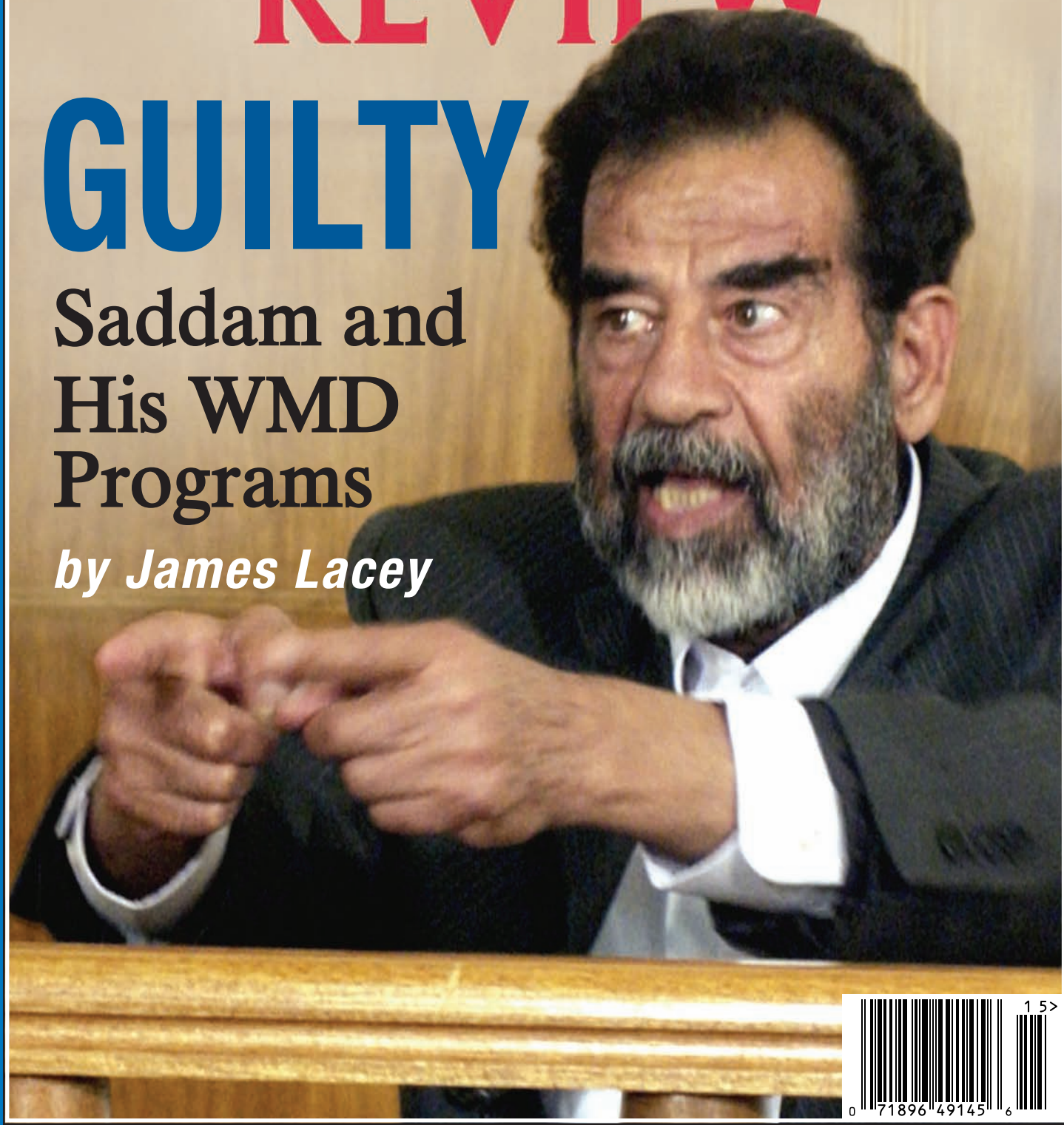
Ross Douthat on *Thank You for Smoking*

NATIONAL REVIEW

GUILTY

Saddam and His WMD Programs

by James Lacey



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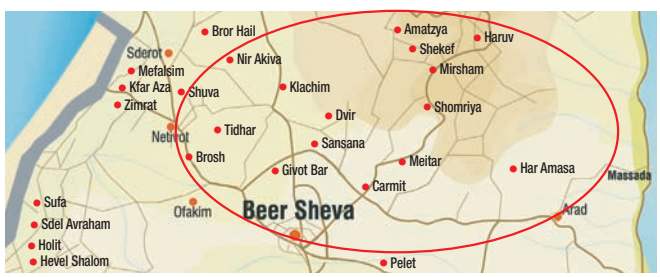
A message from Ronald S. Lauder

Negev residents enjoy their surroundings in Israel's next frontier.

A little more than a year ago, Jewish National Fund embarked on a challenge, a long-term vision: developing the Negev into a hospitable, habitable, profitable environment that would become home to an additional 250,000 people.

Blueprint Negev is not a mirage, it is a vision becoming a reality – with seven new communities created, hundreds of families moved to the Negev, and new job opportunities.

JNF's **Blueprint Negev** initiative is essential to Israel's future. The Negev represents 60% of Israel's landmass, but only 8% of its population lives there. Overcrowding and a strain on resources in the center of the country – 92% of Israel's population resides on 40 % of Israel's land – further underscore the importance of this plan. Additionally, there are an estimated 170,000 Bedouin in the Negev whose population is expected to double in the next seven years. But their educational and medical standards are very low and unemployment hovers at 90%. Opening up the Negev economically will positively impact their future as well. This is a vision for all of Israel.



Northern Negev planned communities map

Blueprint Negev builds on the extensive work already achieved by KKL/JNF. Over 30 JNF reservoirs already in the Negev translate into 10 billion gallons of water. In Beersheva, new housing and large parks are being built. Together with KKL/JNF and other partners we are creating a $300 million consortium of projects that will transform Beersheva into a bustling metropolis.

JNF has established the Negev Central Information Center, which gathers up-to-date data on communities, job opportunities, housing, and education. Already, 10,000 names of Israelis interested in moving to the Negev are in our central database and we have identified 960 new employment opportunities in the Negev. Today, our vision is turning into a reality.

FORESTRY • WATER • COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT • SECURITY
EDUCATION • RESEARCH • TOURISM & RECREATION • ECOLOGY

Blueprint Negev allows us to be 21st century pioneers and to once again be part of a nation under creation. Twenty-five communities are planned; seven are already established. Residents of the newly established communities give testament to these ideals. Our JNF Economic Development Fund helps them finance the move.

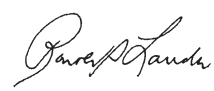
JNF is helping to build a 25-acre, world class, residential rehabilitative village to provide services to the entire Negev population that suffers from a tremendous shortage of paramedical, therapeutic, and special education services. The Aleh Negev project will serve as home to more than 200 adults with disabilities – meeting their needs throughout their lives – and will serve an additional 12,000 disabled children and young adults each year as outpatients. This project, situated near Ofaqim, will bring 3,000 new jobs to the area.

Tourism, which will bring even more employment opportunities, features heavily in our blueprint. Our plans include building a new bike path in the southern Negev, with bike rental stations and refreshment centers.

Bird watchers from around the world will flock to Israel, following the migrations of millions of birds, from world-class centers in Eilat north to the Hula Valley.

All of these are examples of our **Blueprint Negev** plan in action, bringing people to the Negev, and creating jobs that will transform the Negev into a desirable place to live. Our plan encompasses so many projects: building new communities, revitalizing established towns and cities, bolstering services and opportunities throughout the region, improving quality of life, and making all this possible by building vital reservoirs. Singly, they are just projects; together, they form a vision. The **Blueprint Negev** vision.

Sincerely,



Ronald S. Lauder, President, Jewish National Fund
email: **RLauder@jnf.org**

P.S. To get a free DVD about our work in the Negev, visit **www.jnf.org/negev** or to learn more visit **www.jnf.org** or call **888-JNF-0099.**

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NATIONAL REVIEW

APRIL 10, 2006 VOL. LVIII, NO. 6

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■ COVER STORY

The Threat Saddam Posed

Because weapons of mass destruction were not found in Iraq, an endless stream of commentators continues to declare that Saddam Hussein was not the serious threat the administration claimed him to be. The critics also assert that sanctions and the destruction of WMD facilities by U.N. investigators had done so much damage to WMD infrastructure that it would have taken Saddam years to rebuild it even to a minimal capacity. But these claims ignore huge amounts of contrary evidence; and most of this evidence can be found in the final report of the Iraqi Survey Group. *By James Lacey*

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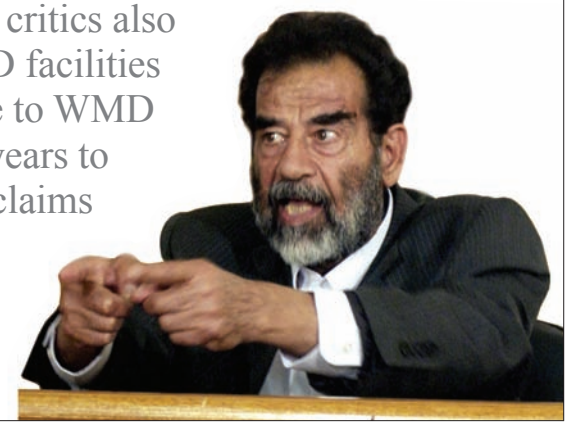

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letters to the editor

CRUNCHY CONTRETEMPS

I understand that what I call "crunchy conservatism" is not Jonah Goldberg's cup of tea, but I can't let his cheap and unjust description of my work go unchallenged ("Living in the Real World," March 27). In my book, *Crunchy Cons*, I go to great lengths to tie the views I hold on a wide variety of cultural and political issues—including, among others, agriculture, the environment, education, religion, and architecture—to the kind of traditionalism that was espoused by Russell Kirk, Richard Weaver, and other conservative intellectuals. Readers of Mr. Goldberg's essay who are not familiar with either my book or my related commentary on National Review Online would assume that, willy-nilly, I choose to baptize things I happen to like as conservative, simply because I happen to like them. This is untrue, as any fair-minded reader of my book will recognize, even if he finds the kind of neo-traditionalism *Crunchy Cons* celebrates and endorses unconvincing. If Mr. Goldberg considers my kind of traditionalism distasteful, that's his business. But the fact that he dismisses a neo-traditionalist critique of the contemporary Right and of American life as mere "popular liberal-Left assumptions" and even "narcissism" says more about him than it does about my book.

Rod Dreher
Dallas, Texas

CHUNKY CONTRETEMPS

We obviously don't want our government policing our eating habits, but making light of obesity, as Dave Shiflett seems to do, is also not wise ("Chief of the Fat Police," March 27). We are a country of "fatties," and it is a matter of concern: The externalities of this situation were completely ignored by Mr. Shiflett, suggesting he's yet to enjoy the body-contact-with-strangers game, which has increased as airlines shrink from enforcing the rule that you must buy two seats if you can't fit into one. Let's not make light of serious health issues, even as we resist the Nanny State.

Bob Chitester
McKean, Pa.

DAVE SHIFLETT REPLIES: Generally speaking, the politicos should keep their wandering mitts out of the bedroom, the barroom, the boardroom, and the kitchen. In my neck of the woods, some schools are sending home letters informing parents that their children are overweight. That sort of expansiveness is much more troubling than a spare tire or two.

A WORK OF CHARITY

Could Theodore Dalrymple's meditation, "Tolerance, If Not Respect" (March 13), be titled incorrectly? Mere tolerance (vide Mr. Dalrymple's father) is content that its object remain an opaque bizarrerie. It cannot move the moral imagination to that unsentimental compassion which renders lucent Mr. Dalrymple's reflections on Gosse, on a Swiss nun's lapse from dogma, and on some late British spiritualist's balm against a nasty irony of war. Mr. Dalrymple pays the tribute of grateful appreciation to Gosse's reverential oblations, to the nun's (as he sees it) happy fault, and to the human tragedy of nagging, inexpungible regret. That tribute is no work of tolerance; it is the work of charity.

Tolerance is the placeholder, the nameable void that remains once charity has been advisedly withdrawn from the political realm. A charitable politics (so the plea of modern discretion goes) is too terrible to be borne, because it offers human passion temptations too terrible to be risked. But in the face of embodied terror, can obligation end at insistence on the placeholder? Granting Mr. Dalrymple's conclusion that we ought not hold our tongues, are we not further obliged to resist our antagonist charitably, for his sake—lest he descend further into "revolting and crudely materialistic . . . thuggery"—and, as his actions may require, by force?

S. A. Cortright
Vallejo, Calif.

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THE WEEK

■ Susan Sarandon will play Cindy Sheehan in a biopic. Could they just mail her the Oscar now?

■ We hesitate to read too much into the presidential straw poll at the Southern Republican Leadership Conference in Memphis—but since everyone else is, this is how we see it: Bill Frist won with 36 percent, but in his home state that showing was merely adequate. Mitt Romney got good buzz from his 14 percent second-place finish, but his supporters paid for Romney voters to come to the event (and weren't particularly straight about it with reporters). John McCain urged his supporters to vote for President Bush as a sign of solidarity. As a long-term strategy, it makes sense for McCain to hug Bush as tightly as possible. As a tactic in Memphis, however, this feint might have been as much about trying to mask front-running McCain's still less-than-commanding position among GOP activists. Sen. George Allen, who has to win reelection in Virginia this year, didn't attempt to organize at the event and finished with a so-so 10 percent. It's all very interesting—but, needless to say, it's also very, very early.

■ The best way to cut Washington down to size would be to encourage the presidential ambitions of more members of Congress. In Memphis, the *Los Angeles Times* reported, the 2008 hopefuls "mostly echoed one another" as they "called for lower taxes, more fiscal discipline, a smaller and less intrusive federal government." Away from the campaign trail and the hopeful expectations of their party's faithful, Senate Republicans added new spending to their $2.8 trillion budget bill, while House Republican leaders rebuffed conservative attempts to offset "emergency" spending on Katrina relief with some spending reductions. *USA Today* reported that enrollment increased in 25 major government programs by an average of 17 percent over the past five years, while the population grew by just 5 percent. "It was the largest five-year expansion of the federal safety net since . . . the 1960s." Two days later, a majority of Republican senators voted to increase spending on low-income programs by $7 billion. President Bush's budget was increased in the Senate by $16 billion. "The Republican party is now principally moderate, if not liberal," Sen. Arlen Specter triumphantly declared. The White House announced that if such a spendthrift budget reached the president's desk it would be vetoed. Just kidding about that last bit.

■ The Dubai ports controversy ended, with the United Arab Emirates–owned company succumbing to congressional browbeating and agreeing to sell its U.S. operations to an American entity. Politically, this issue was unrecoverable for Bush once stupendously ill-informed congressmen took to the airwaves claiming that the UAE would "own" our ports and "run port security." Actually, the company would have only managed a few terminals at U.S. ports (operated the cranes, for example), and security would have been handled by the same U.S. government agencies in charge of it now. During the weeks-long brouhaha, no one could come up with any convincing explanation why the UAE company represented a security risk. But facts didn't matter, since congressional Republicans were determined not to be out-demagogued by Democrats on the ports and were eager to separate themselves from Bush on a high-profile issue. Now that the deal is dead, Rep. Duncan Hunter, the protectionist California Republican, wants to compound the inanity by banning foreign companies from owning critical U.S. infrastructure. That would include power plants, refineries, telecommunications, and much else, which Hunter would force foreign-owned companies to sell off even though there is zero evidence that, having owned these assets for years, the companies are in any way threatening. The $130 billion a year in foreign direct investment in America is an enormous asset to our economy and the world's. Having scored their cheap political points on the Dubai ports deal, congressmen should leave it at that.

What Susan Sarandon may look like in her turn as 'Mother Sheehan'

ROMAN GENN

■ Some liberals are encouraging the Catholic Church to defy the law. They claim that a Republican bill going through Congress will prohibit soup kitchens from serving illegal immigrants. Roger Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles has announced

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THE WEEK...

that he will direct priests in his archdiocese to break the law if it passes. Bill Press applauds his stand, saying that the bill is "anti-American" and "anti-Christian." Before they go to their libraries to remember what Aquinas says about obeying unjust laws, might we suggest that Mahony and Press take the trouble to read the bill in question? Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R., Wis.) is not demanding that churches ask people for documents before serving them, let alone that they turn in illegals. His bill prohibits "harboring" illegal immigrants or assisting them in staying here illegally while knowing (or recklessly disregarding the possibility) that they are illegal. Existing law already contains similar provisions, but they have never been held to apply to charitable work. Bishops (and others) who believe that human rights entail an open door to illegal immigrants are free to make their case. But they should not invent side issues out of thin air.

■ Looking for a reason to be gloomy about the economy? *Really* looking? *New York Times* economics reporter Louis Uchitelle has just the thing to get you frowning. He tries to debunk the idea that the economy has been creating about 200,000 new jobs each month. After his debunking, it turns out that the claim is, well, true. But the numbers allegedly conceal a problem. The pace of new hiring has not been very fast; the reason that the numbers look good is that fewer people are being fired, or quitting their jobs. This might not look like bad news to most people. Most people might even prefer keeping their jobs to losing them and getting hired by someone else. But in the market for bad news, you have to take what you can get. This economy isn't good at generating such news.

■ Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney was handed a bombshell—and opportunity—right before that Tennessee straw poll: Catholic Charities in Boston announced that they would end their adoption work rather than continue it under a state law requiring them to place children with same-sex couples. The governor filed "An Act Protecting Religious Freedom" to save Catholic Charities and other religious groups from being forced to violate their moral principles or stop doing important charitable work. Activists and the media predictably lashed out. The bill is unlikely to go anywhere in the commonwealth's liberal hothouse of a statehouse. But it's an opening shot from one side of similar battles to come—over same-sex marriage, partner benefits, and the like. Old freedoms should not give away to new moralisms.

■ It was an anti-climactic end to the great Patriot Act debate. After all the heated rhetoric, opponents bowed to public will and voted for reauthorization in overwhelming numbers. The across-the-board renewal of all provisions that were scheduled to sunset is a tribute to President Bush's leadership. The administration faced down an often slanderous anti-Patriot campaign and won a properly balanced result: one that is deferential to individual rights but understands that protection from terrorism is one of those rights. Civil-liberties protections, such as the ability to seek judicial review of demands for information, are shored up, but vital investigative improvements are preserved. The infamous "wall" that long separated intelligence and law enforcement will stay down, meaning agents will remain free to compare notes and develop a more complete picture of threats. Procedures for monitoring terrorists (including roving wiretaps) and cutting off their funding streams will remain in place. And rules for delayed notification (or "sneak and peek") search warrants have been sensibly standardized. The Patriot Act has been central to avoiding a repeat of 9/11. Its preservation is a victory for the American people.

■ Two more women's deaths have been linked to RU-486, the combination of two drugs used to induce abortion. It may be that the fatalities are the result of the way Planned Parenthood clinics have been using the drugs rather than inherent dangers from the drugs themselves. And Planned Parenthood has rushed to assure us that RU-486 is statistically safer for women than continued pregnancy or surgical abortion. That may be so. But the FDA hasn't taken that calm, cool approach when other drugs have been implicated in deaths. Palladone caused no deaths, but was merely suspected of posing a risk of death when combined with alcohol. It was pulled from the market last year. Marketing of Tysabri was suspended last year when it was linked to one death, even though many MS sufferers have no good substitutes for the drug. (The FDA is on the verge of letting it back on the market.) Elidel cream was forced to carry a cancer warning based on animal studies: again, no deaths. The FDA has merely issued a rather wimpy advisory about RU-486. Why the double standard? Why the lack of outcry from the usual "public-health advocates"? Those are the questions we would ask, if we did not already know the answers.

■ "Islamic Prison Chaplain Accused of Hate Speech" is one of those headlines the newspapers should keep at the ready. The most recent case involves Umar Abdul-Jalil, who is head of Islamic chaplains in the New York City Department of Correction. Abdul-Jalil, formerly William Bostick of the Bronx, told a conference of Islamic leaders in Tucson (where else would you expect to find a conference of Islamic leaders?) that "the greatest terrorists in the world occupy the White House, without a doubt." He also said that American Muslims should

RE-ENTER, JAMES BAKER

Known for a masterful touché
(He handed Gore his head that day),
Jim's reappearance at this point
Implies a war so out of joint,
The House Republicans sweat like
Hans Brinker fingering that dike.
If Baker pulls it off, I've got
Stocks to run by him while he's hot.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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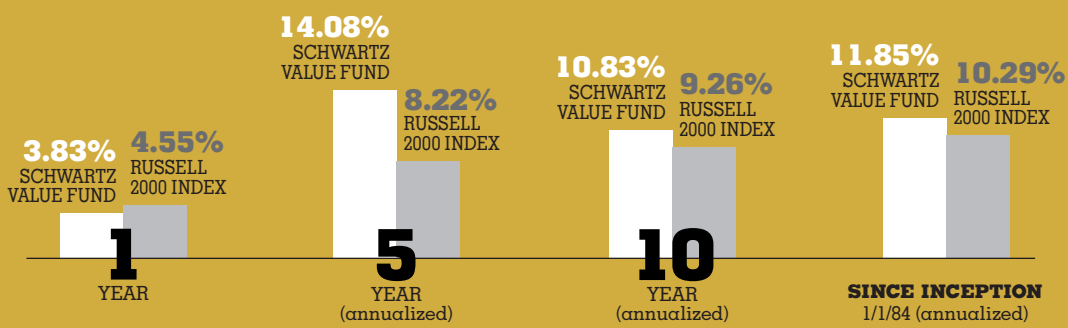
Performance speaks louder than words

INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE THRU 12/31/05



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THE WEEK...

stop allowing "the Zionists of the media to dictate what Islam is to us." He further reported to his coreligionists that Muslims detained after 9/11 are being tortured in New York jails. All these remarks were taped by an anti-terrorist group that had infiltrated the conference. New York's Mayor Michael Bloomberg—who, a couple of weeks previously, had dismissed a city employee for playing solitaire on his desktop computer—suspended Abdul-Jalil for two weeks. By the time you read this, the chaplain will be back at his desk . . . though not, one hopes, playing solitaire.

■ Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg suggested that congressional critics of the Court's use of foreign law were indirectly to blame for a death threat she had received. Her target: a proposed resolution by Rep. Tom Feeney (R., Fla.). That resolution is no bomb-throwing exercise. If enacted, it would express the sense of Congress that when the Court is trying to figure out the meaning of the Constitution, it should consult foreign law only when foreign law has some bearing on the original understanding of the Constitution. That position is entirely defensible. Former justice Sandra Day O'Connor, meanwhile, gave a speech warning that attempts to reduce judicial power could over time lead to dictatorship. That is true, even as it is true that acquiescence in judicial seizures of power could result over time in judicial dictatorship. Sensible political commentary does not traffic in this kind of highly abstract slippery-slopism. And how are we to distinguish between illegitimate and worthy restrictions on judicial power? O'Connor says that she knows what's illegitimate when she sees it. That is a perfect expression of the willful jurisprudence that she can, thankfully, no longer practice. What both these episodes show is that some justices have

Off the Dole, Ten Years Later

A CENTRAL precept of free-market economics is that incentives matter. If you raise the minimum wage, employers will hire fewer workers. If you raise the tax on income, individuals will work less. In retrospect, some of the most "radical" conservative policy innovations in history have simply attempted to align individual incentives with sensible social objectives.

One of the most controversial policies adopted in memory was welfare reform in 1996. An epidemic of single motherhood was one of the most pressing social problems of the late 20th century. Teens who had children were far more likely to drop out of school and live a life of poverty. Children of teen mothers faced disadvantages from the time they were born, when they averaged relatively low birth weights, through adulthood, when they were far more likely to end up in prison.

Until 1996, federal welfare policy perversely *encouraged* teen motherhood. A single mother could increase her welfare payment simply by having another baby. She could lengthen her stay on welfare by spacing her children out over time. The authors of welfare reform argued, quite controversially at the time, that these incentives induced young teenagers to have children out of wedlock. The echoes of the politically correct uproar that ensued still ring in the halls of the nation's newspapers.

But, against enormous odds, the 1996 reform finally reversed the pro-illegitimacy incentive. The bill required teen mothers under the age of 18 to stay with a parent if they received welfare support. It also hammered deadbeat dads, allowing states to use employment data to track down child-support payments. It encouraged capped benefits, so that handouts no longer increased automatically with the number of children, and it imposed a five-year time limit on welfare, making it impossible to use births to extend one's stay on welfare indefinitely.

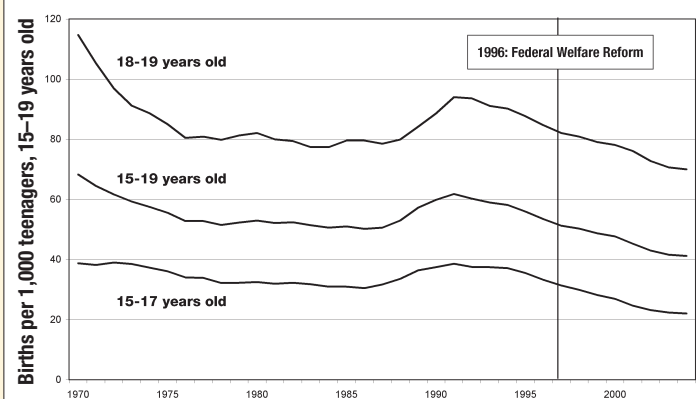
Teen birthrates have dropped sharply since the reform, but the nearby chart still ignites a firestorm of debate. Opponents of the 1996 reform maintain that, while birthrates are down, they were declining prior to the reform. It's not the reform that did it, they claim, but something else. Fear of contracting AIDS is one key factor that is often cited.

But when big-picture charts don't tell a complete story, economists dig deeper. In this case, states had a lot of leeway to enact different flavors of welfare reform. A number of studies have shown that states that were tougher on teen parenthood saw bigger declines in fertility than those that were not. My personal favorite is a recent paper by economists Anna Aizer and Sarah McLanahan, published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, which shows that strengthening child-support enforcement laws led men to father fewer out-of-wedlock children. While other factors started the downtrend, welfare reform clearly extended it.

The good news for economists is that it looks like incentives really do matter, even for fertility. The good news for society is that the 1996 welfare reform got incentives right, and led to a sharp decline in illegitimacy.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT

BIRTH RATES FOR TEENAGERS, BY AGE, 1970–2004



SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, VITAL STATISTICS OF THE UNITED STATES

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developed an unhealthy regard for their own imagined prerogatives, which apparently include immunity from criticism.

■ The Bush administration issued a new National Security Strategy, a usefully chastened version of the 2002 document. The original strategy emphasized democracy promotion and the U.S. right to preempt emerging threats. The new version retains those themes, but has some adjustments. It dwells much more on questions of ideology and the nature of Islam, making it clear that discrediting the terrorists' creed—partly through supporting democratic change in the Middle East—is crucial to the War on Terror. It advocates the promotion of "effective democracies," a phrase meant to distinguish thoroughly democratic nations from those that simply hold elections. And it places more importance on alliances and diplomacy. All of this strikes us as sensible, and no one has yet to offer a conceptually compelling alternative to the basic Bush approach. There is an old Reagan saw about the economist who realizes that something works in practice, but wonders if it will work in theory. The Bush strategy faces the opposite, more common conundrum: It works in theory; the question is whether it can be made to work in practice.

■ After years of delay, the intelligence community has begun sharing with the public the millions of files from the intelligence haul amassed in the War on Terror. These include files from Saddam Hussein's regime. With scholars and analysts now poring over just the small portion thus far released, the yield is already corroborating an underemphasized justification for the removal of Saddam: his longtime facilitation of Islamist terror groups, including al-Qaeda and its affiliates. The Iraq files demonstrate a close relationship between Saddam's intelligence service and the Phillipines-based Abu Sayyaf organization, whose terrorist activities were bankrolled by bin Laden's brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, beginning in the mid-1990s. They show that the regime was in personal contact with bin Laden himself, meeting with him, for example, in Sudan in 1995 for talks about collaboration, and seeking "to invigorate this relationship" after bin Laden settled in Afghanistan thereafter. Other files, meanwhile, indicate Iraqi involvement in terror training, financing, and operational planning—including preparations for a wave of bombings and assassinations against Western targets under the direction of Saddam's son, Uday, before Coalition forces invaded in March 2003. Inexplicably, the administration has done a poor job of making the case that Iraq was a logical extension of the War on Terror. The intelligence files, however, may yet solidify that case.

■ Many Old Blues (and many Americans) want to know why Sayed Rahmatullah Hashemi, the former Taliban spokesman with a fourth-grade education, is now an undergraduate at Yale. Sen. John Cornyn (R., Texas) wants to know how he got into the country. Since the Taliban is a terrorist organization, which still murders Afghans and American soldiers, and since Hashemi flacked for it, he would seem to be in violation of the Patriot Act and the Real ID Act, which frown on letting such people visit. Cornyn has asked Homeland Security chief Michael Chertoff whether Hashemi was properly investigated, and when he might be deported. For decades, a reliable theme of movies and TV dramas was the old Nazi, fleeing delayed justice, or weaving new plots. Poor guys—if only they had lived a little longer, they could go to Yale, and maybe chat with President Levin at the Lizzie. "Shame about the death camps—that was Himmler's shop. But you must understand, we were plagued with neocons . . ."

■ Abdul Rahman, 41, is on trial for his life in a Kabul court for the crime of converting to Christianity 16 years ago. When Rahman converted, he was working with Afghan refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan; he then moved to Germany before returning home in 2002. The constitution of liberated Afghanistan is partly based on sharia law, under which Muslims may not leave their faith. But liberated Afghanistan is itself based on the exertions of the United States. We do not expect to sow the world with clones of ourselves; we deal with established tyrannies (Saudi Arabia, China) all the time. But we will not spend our blood and treasure to install and defend a state that indulges such gross injustice. Europeans began to learn the lesson four centuries ago: "The conscience of man is the seat and throne of God in him" (Robert Barclay, 1678). Now they come for the Christians; next they will come for the unveiled, the shaven, and the music lovers.

Consumers do not have a real choice in which of the following services?

- Long distance
- Wireless phones
- High-speed Internet
- Cable TV

Answer: Cable TV. While consumers have many choices for long distance, wireless phone and high-speed Internet services, the Federal Communication Commission reports that 96% of families only have one choice of cable TV provider.

Source: FCC 04-136, Annual Assessment of the Status of Competition in the Market for the Delivery of Video Programming, July 23, 2004

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The Week...

■ A new U.N. human-rights council has been created by a General Assembly vote of 170 to 4. The U.S. was one of the four. How could it vote otherwise when the council fails to bar from membership even states under U.N. sanction for human-rights violations? Yet no sooner had we voted no than we were assuring the world that we would shell out 22 percent of the council's operating expenses. Which raises the question: Why? The disadvantage of boycotting the new institution is that doing so might diminish our ability to stop it from acting against our interests. But the better course would be to create another new institution—outside the U.N.—of liberal democracies devoted to the protection of human rights. This would marginalize the U.N. body, and would give us more influence on international human-rights practice than would vying for influence in the U.N.'s club of dictators. We would increase the importance of this new, genuine human-rights organization if we first abandoned the U.N.'s charade. President Bush should take a lesson from Ronald Reagan, who in 1984 withdrew from UNESCO to protest the outrages of that institution. It's time to walk away.

■ Sleaze is swamping Tony Blair and his Labour party. During his tenure, one minister after another has had to resign over abuses of power and financial irregularities. Tessa Jowell, one of his most loyal ministers, saved her job only by leaving her husband, claiming that she had no idea about his hedge-fund activities, offshore trusts, multiple mortgages, and huge payments from an Italian. Prosecutors in Milan say the Italian in question is prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, who was paying for the favors of the British government. Right on top of the Jowell hoo-ha comes the revelation that Blair personally authorized bending the rules for financing his party. Gifts have to be declared, but he found a lawyer's loophole that donors could instead make loans, and these could legally be kept secret from everyone, including his party chairman and treasurer. These sponsors are self-made millionaires, and some of their businesses have benefited hugely from government contracts. A number of them have also been rewarded with peerages, opening Blair to the accusation that he abolished the old House of Lords only to sell seats through craft and graft in the new one. Two facts: He has created far more peers than any previous prime minister, and polls show that the public now thinks Blair and Labour as sleazy, or more, than ever the Conservatives were.

■ They're rioting on the streets of Paris, and tear gas is the scent of the season. Déjà vu all over again, isn't it? Only a few weeks ago, the violence was countrywide, led by disaffected Arabs and Muslims. This time, the students are at it, they've shut down the Sorbonne, and they've got the unions to threaten a general strike. The young expect their first jobs to carry rights to tenure and compensation that make them virtually unsackable, and they like this so much that they are hurling rocks at the cops in the traditional manner. One direct consequence of such privilege at work is that almost a quarter of the young are too expensive to employ—in some blighted areas the proportion of young unemployed rises to almost half. Prime Minister de Villepin is hoping to implement a law allowing employers to take on those under 26 without any protective rights. Since he's in the running for president next year he is expected to retreat under cover of some Napoleonic flourish presented as an advance. Even so limited a scope to hire and fire, the students and the unions say, is a surrender to the brutal practices of American capitalism, and nobody becomes President of France on a platform like that.

■ The Netherlands is blessed with an organization named the Institute of Multicultural Development, whose purpose, one must assume, is to advance the development of multiculturalism. To this end, the institute has sponsored a soccer match between Dutch Muslims, who do not approve of homosexuality, and Dutch homosexuals, who (a survey disclosed) are fearful of Muslims. A homosexual Muslim may, assuming he has survived the attentions of his fellow Muslims, play for either team. It seems that the teams are to be all-male. We have no news of any similar event for the ladies. Do female Dutch Muslims play golf?

■ Last year the socialist government of Spain legalized same-sex marriage and adoption. The licensing authorities of that country have now brought their documents into line, replacing the words for "father" and "mother" on Spanish birth certificates with "Progenitor A" and "Progenitor B." Standing athwart this horrid development crying *¡Alto!* is Archbishop Agustín García Gasco of Valencia, who in a pastoral letter blasted the civil authorities for "imposing their ideological instructions to destroy the institution of the family and, with it, society itself." We wish the archbishop well, and in his support make bold to say: "Our Progenitor A, Who art in Heaven . . ."

■ With the debut of HBO's new polygamy television drama, *Big Love*, it's getting tougher to laugh off the argument that same-sex marriage will lead to polygamy, polyamory, and ultimately to the replacement of marriage itself by an infinitely flexible partnership system. *Big Love* makes a point of comparing polygamy to the drive for gay marriage, arguing that as long as people love each other, family structure doesn't matter. Even *Newsweek* is grudgingly acknowledging the connection, reporting that a "new wave of polygamy activists" is "emerging in the wake of the gay-marriage movement." "If Heather can have two mommies,"

It's Frist!

The news from Memphis wasn't good.
The doc did not, as winners should,
Burst from the gates with nostrils flared:
Touts in the stands routinely stared,
Then left to sample tailgate fare.
His gallop's slow; the old gray mare—
But let's not get unpleasant. He
Won by a length in Tennessee.

—W. H. von Dreele

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these activists say, "she should also be able to have two mommies and a daddy." Meanwhile, libertarian *New York Times* columnist John Tierney has endorsed polygamy, welcoming it along with same-sex marriage. The debate over same-sex marriage has never been primarily about society's acceptance of gays. It is about whether marriage will be deconstructed—which is something we seem likely to find out the hard way.

■ *V for Vendetta*, produced by Larry and Andy Wachowski, the brothers who gave us *The Matrix*, is, like that flick, a paranoid futurist thriller. Parsing its politics is like asking Hannity and Colmes to grill H. P. Lovecraft. Yet politics there is. The story, about a freedom-fighting terrorist in a Guy Fawkes mask, is based on a left-wing Eighties comic book that depicted a fascist Thatcherite Britain. Now, four-plus years after 9/11, and nine-plus months after 7/7, the murderous hero sets off bombs in London. His big target: Parliament. The self-hating fantasies of our creative class, infants screaming at their parents, haven't been clearer since . . . well, since *Syriana*, or *Fahrenheit 9/11*, or . . .

■ With Sarandon playing Sheehan in that biopic, there is yet more reason to feel sad when you replay your mental DVD of *Bull Durham*. What's next: Sean Penn as the Yale Taliban? Denzel Washington as Moussaoui? If that is far-fetched, it's only a matter of degree, for as conservative film blogger Jason Apuzzo argues, Hollywood has discovered that it no longer needs the heartland. Low-budget films can make tidy profits playing to blue-state audiences and the foreign anti-American market. Michael Moore led the way, but George Clooney is following. "Hollywood," Apuzzo writes, "simply doesn't need the Red States any more. Hollywood's more interested in how a film plays in Mexico or France these days than in Kansas. . . . That's the global economy for you—Hollywood's now out-sourcing its audience." Apuzzo's solution: red-state producers who play the same game. *The Passion of the Christ* grossed $610 million on a budget of $30 million. So, who wants to put on a show?

■ "You'd scarce expect one of my age / To speak in public on the stage," began the traditional school declamation exercise. Little Autum Ashante, seven years old, is well accustomed to public speaking, as she demonstrated when invited to address a gathering of middle-school children in Peekskill, N.Y. After asking her audience to stand for a pledge, she told the white children to sit down again, as it was to be a segregated pledge. ("I pledge allegiance to my black people . . .") Autum then recited a poem of, she claimed, her own composition, titled "White Nationalism Put U in Bondage." The poem neither rhymed, nor scanned, nor made much sense, but appeared to be a philippic against white people (in particular against Columbus, Darwin, and an unspecified Morgan—presumably J.P.) for the injuries they had visited on black people. You'd scarce expect one not yet eight to be so full of racial hate . . . unless you had met Autum's father, a Nation of Islam adherent who homeschools the child. When the school district telephoned a recorded apology to several hundred parents, Mr. Ashante denounced officials of the district as "racist crackers."

■ The city of Calabasas, in southern California, has banned smoking outdoors. The city's anti-smoking ordinance, the first of its kind in the nation, forbids smoking in city streets, parks, and playgrounds, and in the common areas of apartment buildings. Thus we continue our descent into that "species of oppression" Tocqueville warned of, where government "covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate." Time was, the authorities left us alone so long as we did not rob, kill, embezzle, or incite rebellion. Now they ticket us for smoking in the park. Bans on the chewing of gum, loud talking, slamming doors, and running in the streets cannot be far behind. And thus: "The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided . . . till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

■ Students of corporate law learn about the celebrated British case of *Salomon* v. *Salomon & Co.* (1897) in which a shoemaker successfully sued a corporation whose only shareholders were himself, his wife, and his children. Well, here is a fellow in

On average, how much have cable TV prices gone up since 1995?

- ⬭ **33%**
- ⬭ **48%**
- ⬭ **61%**
- ⬭ **86%**

Answer: 86%. According to the Federal Communication Commission, cable bills have risen 86% since 1995.

Source: FCC 05-12 Report on Cable Industry Prices; February 4, 2005

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The Week...

Lodi, Calif., taking the principle one step further. Curtis Gokey, a Lodi city employee who drives municipal dump trucks, backed one such into a private vehicle owned by . . . himself. It seemed reasonable to Mr. Gokey to sue the municipality for damage caused by Gokey (employee) to the property of Gokey (citizen). When the claim was denied, Mrs. Gokey raised the banner that had been dashed from the hands of her husband, and filed suit for an even larger amount, on the grounds that her name also appears on the insulted vehicle's registration. A defendant who represents himself is traditionally said to have a fool for a client. What should we say about a plaintiff who sues over damages caused by himself? Only, perhaps, that the litigious vapors that permeate every aspect of modern American life have deprived him of his senses.

■ Once upon a time the press was so proud of its skepticism. That has gone out the window when it comes to anyone willing to speak ill of the U.S. military. Case in point: *New York Times* reporter Hassan M. Fattah, who on March 11 penned a profile of one Ali Shalal Qaissi—a man who claimed to be the hooded Abu Ghraib prisoner pictured atop a cardboard box with wires attached to his fingers. As it turned out, Qaissi—who now peddles his tale for a living and features the hooded silhouette on his business card—was not the man in the photograph, as the *Times* acknowledged in a subsequent editors' note. In admitting their error, the editors' excuse was that "lawyers for former prisoners at Abu Ghraib vouched for him" and "human rights workers seemed to support his account." Nevertheless, the editors wrote, in 2004 military investigators identified the man on the box as someone else, according to at least one newspaper report. To discover that report, the *Times* would only have had to search its own archives. But that would require more skepticism than our credulous press seems able to muster these days.

■ *Tick-tick-tick-tick-tick* . . . Mike Wallace, 87, retired from *60 Minutes*. How long has it been? Wallace was with the show when it started in 1968, having been at CBS continuously since 1963, though he served an earlier stint that began in 1951—the year Edward R. Murrow premiered his first TV show. It is no exaggeration to say that before Mike Wallace there was nothing. After him, there lies, not nothing exactly, but the diminished thing that network television has become. The days when it ruled midcult middle America have long been lost to competition (cable, the Internet) and to its own incorrigible biases. With the passing of network television we leave behind a myth of community, which was false, but which gained some truth from having once been believed, and fare forward into our contentious, crazy, sometimes more honest present.

■ Slobodan Milosevic was one of the many monsters spawned by Communism. Growing up in President Tito's Yugoslavia, he learned to follow the Party's one great rule: that the ends always justify the means. And the ends were the simple ones of acquiring an unbreakable hold on power and wealth. Perhaps anyone chasing such ends so ruthlessly is disturbed by definition, but Milosevic was a very sad case. Both his parents committed suicide. Almost certainly he arranged the murder of Ivan Stambolic, his patron in the Party and eventual president of Yugoslavia. Tito's Yugoslavia fell apart after 1991, in a close repeat of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Big Brother it had once copied but then quarreled with. Without missing a beat, Milosevic transferred the purposes and practices of Communism to Serb nationalism, whipping his fellow Serbs up to fight civil wars against the Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, and Kosovar Albanians. The misery of ethnic cleansing and genocide engulfed all these inhabitants of former Yugoslavia until NATO interventions put an end to it. Serbs themselves eventually came to see that their supposed champion had brought them nothing but death and destruction, and they handed him over to a special court set up under U.N. auspices to try him in The Hague. His trial had lasted for almost five inconclusive years. Probably he took the wrong medication, but he may have chosen to follow the example of both his parents, in the ambiguous final act of a dark career. R.I.P.

AT WAR

Year Three

The American-led invasion of Afghanistan was so quick and crushing—scarcely had R. W. Apple written the word "quagmire" than the Taliban fell—that many supporters of the Iraq War expected a similar sweep. American and British troops rolled up the Tigris-Euphrates valley to Baghdad in three weeks, but the hunt for Saddam and his sons, and the struggle against Baathist and al-Qaeda terrorists (as well as, at times, freelance Sunni and Shiite extremists), has prolonged the war to three years. More than 2,300 Americans have paid the highest price.

If we had not invaded Iraq and deposed Saddam in 2003, what would the world look like?

Three years is an eternity in our ADD era, and long by the standards of American wars. Appomattox came four years after Ft. Sumter, Tokyo Bay three years and nine months after Pearl Harbor. But many wars, including the Cold War, have taken decades. At the beginning of the Iraq War, NR recalled Trotsky, who observed that a man wishing an easy life picked the wrong century to be born in. This is not an argument for blank checks or fighting without metrics, merely a call for realism, and patience.

If we had not invaded Iraq and deposed Saddam in 2003, what would the world look like? He would have slipped out of the regime of sanctions—the status quo simply could not be maintained—and gone full speed ahead with WMD. As his science adviser told the Iraqi Survey Group, "Saddam's primary concern was retaining a cadre of skilled scientists to facilitate reconstitution of WMD programs after sanctions were lifted." If he could slip germs to terrorists, we would have a gaudier 9/11.

What would be the consequences of the quick and chastened pullout that Democrats, and some self-chastened conservatives, want now? Donald Rumsfeld, in an anniversary op-ed, compared them to "handing postwar Germany back to the Nazis," or

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asking "Eastern Europe to return to Soviet domination." A retreat would delight Iran and Syria, inspire anti-Americans in Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, and teach radicals, like the Muslim Brotherhood, to take the path of terror.

What is the outlook for success? Behind the grim daily headlines, there have been two pieces of important good news this year. Iraq has not tipped into chaos. Ayad Allawi, the secular Shiite, thinks it has. "If this is not civil war," he told the BBC, "then God knows what civil war is." Come to Gettysburg, we'll show you. In fact, although sectarian violence has risen, Shiites and Sunni Arabs have not flown at each other's throats. Meanwhile the Iraqi army is coming into shape, conducting more operations, and taking more casualties. This is not some fortuitous event. We took the Iraqi army apart to de-Baathify it, then rushed it into combat too soon. The Pentagon stepped back, rethought, and retrained. Armies are a source of political power in the Middle East, though almost all of them are joke armies, capable only of bullying civilians. Turkey built a real army after World War I, however, and perhaps Iraq can do the same.

If Iraq is to be a success, its politics will have to succeed. The clans and creeds that could tear each other apart can hold each other up if they decide that half a loaf is better than hell. The rest of the Bush administration will be spent giving them that chance.

POLITICS

Fool's Gold

Russ Feingold has thrown down the gauntlet, and Republicans should be eager to pick it up. The Wisconsin senator wants to censure President Bush for the National Security Agency surveillance program. This should be the occasion for a thoroughgoing debate on the program and its legal basis, one on which Republicans are on solid footing.

If Bush had been breaking the law, he wouldn't have briefed top members of Congress about the program. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), which the administration is supposed to have violated, doesn't cover wiretapping overseas, and the bulk of the NSA program seems to have involved overseas targets who were calling persons in the U.S. The theory of the Feingolds of the world is that FISA is a global regime and a president can never institute any surveillance outside of its parameters. Not only is this a misreading of the statute, it is a trampling on executive power as it is supposed to exist under the Constitution. It is the very nature of the executive that it doesn't require legislative authorization for all of its actions, so long as those actions don't violate the law and are constitutional. That is the case here. Indeed, Democrats on the Senate Intelligence Committee seemed prepared to accept a deal to give congressional blessing to the NSA program in exchange for enhanced oversight—before Feingold launched his incendiary censure proposal.

Feingold is thinking of politics more than the law. The left-wing "netroots" (the grassroots of the Internet) are rallying to Feingold's proposal. These bloggers and their readers are a key part of Feingold's constituency for his prospective run for the 2008 presidential nomination. Anything Feingold does to please them helps himself, even if it is irrational and harmful to his party's interests. It often will be, since the netroots can't distinguish between political strategy and self-gratifying stunts.

The censure resolution is so obviously overreaching that other Senate Democrats have been keeping their distance. The controversy might serve to help Hillary Clinton, who looks more moderate every time another member of her party dives into the Bush-hating swamps. But it also should, properly handled, help the White House. The NSA program is relatively popular—indeed is one of the administration's most popular initiatives at the moment.

Republicans will reap no benefit, however, from merely lamenting the zaniness of Feingold's proposal—as Bill Frist has—and telling their voters how it heralds a Democratic push for impeachment should they lose Congress. They have to engage on the substance, not only over the NSA program, but over what Feingold represents. He epitomizes the Left's do-nothing, or at least do-the-absolute-minimum, approach to the

Continued on page 15

How much would competition lower your cable bill?

- 7 - 12%
- 11 - 14%
- 17 - 22%
- 28 - 42%

Answer: 28 - 42%. A study by Bank of America Equity Research found that cable companies have cut their prices by 28 to 42% in areas where telephone companies offer a choice in television service to consumers.

Source: Bank of America Equity Research report; January 23, 2006

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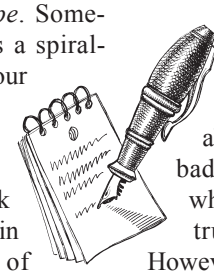
notes & asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: November 16, my first visit to New York City. I landed at JFK around 1 P.M. and drove straight into Manhattan. First stop: NATIONAL REVIEW offices. Do you give tours? I sheepishly corrected the assumption that I am a subscriber: not currently, but was for many years starting around '73. A slow reader, with a wife and four young children, I was spending more time reading NR than I could afford and so had to quit. But I still love NR. I was welcomed warmly and given a tour by Messrs. Anthony Dick and Kevin Longstreet. They kindly ushered me into the Holy Place. It was reassuring to find everything consistent with all I had read about it: unpretentious and hospitable.

November 17, 7 P.M. My business meeting in New Jersey was over. So was my fantasy of getting a glimpse of your 80th birthday party, which started at 6. But later, as I was making good time on the drive to JFK, and reflecting on the kind Providence that had brought me to New York on this very day, I turned north to Manhattan again, parked, and put my jacket and tie back on. I entered the Pierre ballroom in time to hear your son, the very funny comic novelist, comment on the video in progress. I stood in the back and witnessed the rest of the program. When it was over, I was startled to hear "Steve, you made it!" from Mr. Dick, who, to my amazement, recognized me. Overwhelmed with the success of my endeavor and wishing to express my gratitude, I looked for you in the crowd and, mirabile dictu, spotted you in the lobby. But as you were about to cross my path it seemed to me you looked somehow desperate and I could not bear to take so much further advantage of your eleemosynary nature to stop you thus. So, I substituted "Happy Birthday, sir!" to which you turned in passing and thanked me. I then proceeded to the top of the Empire State Building, where I could recapture my soaring spirit.

I would like you to know some of the gratitude that I feel toward you, and the beneficent influence you have had on me—you yourself and you as synechdoche for NR. And since you can now read this at your leisure, I will say a bit more than I would have said in the context of your party. The thing I had planned to say is that one of my family's Christmas traditions is to read your sister's articles to our children from an old, wrinkled copy of NR. One day I mean to read her book. I am currently rereading (for the past six months) Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn's *Intelligent American's Guide to Europe*. Somewhere in my home there is a spiral-notebook compilation of your peculiar vocabulary words and definitions. Quite a few years ago, I determined to win Nika Hazelton's limerick contest, with two objectives in mind. One was the bottle of champagne. But I also devoted one of my five limericks, as provocative as I could devise, to goad you into explaining why you are Roman Catholic (I am a Calvinist Christian). I missed on the champagne, but you did answer my question in your recent book (whether or not my limerick was responsible). This question bothered me for many years; namely, how could a very well-read master of syllogism have failed to be persuaded by the Reformers? I have scrutinized your writings for any clue to this. Once, when Bill Allen (my favorite college professor) honored me by seating me with Rich Lowry during Allen's U.S. Senate campaign, I unwisely pumped him for some insights (which I perceived he did not appreciate). While your book's answer was not fully satisfying (love would see the difference removed, as when you and your sister "baptized" your houseguest), I eventually saw that it did answer the question why you are Catholic: because of all of the people you have loved and who have loved you. This is consistent with Proverbs' teaching that love is the most effective persuasion, far more persuasive than syllogisms. But it did not answer the question, or analyze (so far as I recall) whose syllogisms, per se, you find more compelling, or which ones you find defective. That almost happened in a *Firing Line* exchange with R. C. Sproul; but at the crucial moment when the matter of justification by faith alone arose, (alas!) Mr. Kinsley interrupted, and it was never resumed. Unlike baptism, or your Jesuit's syllogism, or to which Christian church you belong, this is a life-or-death issue (see Rom. 3:28; 10:1-4). After so many years I remain in suspense. To resolve which I gladly would have doused you as you passed by! And, while I am likewise certain that happiness will reign in heaven, that woman's bliss may begin with weeping, at finding her beloved pet absent. But how many more tears must the Lord wipe from my face, should I find you absent (Is. 25:8)! In this world, so badly broken through deception, what a tragedy that even love and truth can be at cross purposes. However, I am quite hopeful that your love, gift for friendship, and pursuit of truth on many fronts, which I rejoiced to hear attested at your party, are exactly what they seem to be: the fruits of genuine faith in Christ. Therefore I anticipate having innumerable, heavenly conversations with you, since Providence has not afforded me such a luxury on earth. But it has afforded me many joys through you and NATIONAL REVIEW, for which I am profoundly grateful. My thanks to you all, particularly to Messrs. Dick and Longstreet. Again, "Happy Birthday, sir!"



Sincerely,
Steve Ritchie
Oviedo, Fla.

P.S. If (heaven forbid!) your guidance has been far better than I imagine and I am consigned to Purgatory for such infractions (and worse), I shall repair to Purgatory's library to catch up on all the NR issues I have missed. I think I am safe in assuming I will find NR in Purgatory, as there could be only one sad realm where NR does not exist.

Dear Mr. Ritchie: I'll just show St. Peter your letter and we'll *both* be accommodated. Gratefully,

—WFB

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Continued from page 13

war. He voted against the Patriot Act, and its reauthorization. He obviously opposes the NSA program. He was against the Iraq War, and opposes using coercive interrogation against terrorists abroad. He is against almost any measure in the War on Terror that doesn't fit neatly within the confines of the American law-enforcement system (and against even ones that do: the Patriot Act).

In short, the ground that Bush lost on national security over the Dubai ports deal is there for the retaking.

PUBLIC POLICY

Enforcement First

In December, the House of Representatives passed an immigration bill based on the principle of "enforcement first": There should be no amnesty or guest-worker program until real immigration enforcement is in place. The Senate Judiciary Committee under Arlen Specter is trying to reverse that principle by packaging legalization of illegal aliens (a.k.a. amnesty) and guest-worker programs together with promises of future enforcement.

A bit of background: Sen. Edward Kennedy, the Democrats' standard bearer on immigration, joined with Sen. John McCain to promote a broad amnesty for the 12 million illegal aliens already here, plus a large increase in new immigration. Judiciary chairman Specter offered a slightly less sweeping amnesty, but packaged it with an unlimited guest-worker program and an increase in immigration of 1 million people per year.

The Senate's approach to immigration so far might thus be described by Mary Poppins: A spoonful of enforcement helps the amnesty go down. This is the same bait-and-switch approach Congress took in 1986, when it passed a large amnesty in exchange for a ban on hiring future illegal aliens, as a way to turn off the magnet that attracted illegals in the first place. Naturally, once the amnesty ran its course, promises of enforcement were abandoned; in 2004, according to the Government Accountability Office, only three employers in the entire country were fined for the knowing employment of illegal aliens.

Although a majority of the Judiciary Committee shares the goal of legalizing the illegal population and providing for large increases in the importation of foreign labor, differences among the members have slowed progress. The McCain-Kennedy approach, for instance, would put illegals on track for citizenship, while Specter's proposal would have them remain permanently as an outsider class not eligible for citizenship.

The lack of progress has prompted Sen. Bill Frist to introduce his own measure, presented as an enforcement-only bill. Initial hopes that the majority leader had seen the wisdom of the House approach were dashed when it became clear that the valuable enforcement measures in his bill were combined with a doubling of legal immigration levels. What's more, Frist made clear that he would abandon his bill if the members of the Judiciary Committee managed to agree on what kind of amnesty they wanted.

Insistence on a front-loaded amnesty may doom whatever the Senate passes. Seventy-one House members, led by Rep. Tom Tancredo, recently sent a letter to Specter criticizing "thinly disguised attempts to provide amnesty," adding that "if the Senate were to pass such a proposal, we believe it would doom any chance of a real reform bill reaching the President's desk this year."

There is evidence that, despite the sorry state of the debate in the Senate, the intellectual consensus is shifting. *Washington Post* columnist Robert Samuelson—no conservative, certainly, but a clear-eyed thinker on economic issues—wrote recently of the need for tough immigration enforcement: "To make immigration succeed, we need to curb some immigration." He also called for amnesty, since many illegals are rooted here and we were complicit in letting them settle in the first place.

Perhaps. Although we at NR have never made a secret of our skepticism about amnesty, it's a legitimate topic of debate—but that debate should begin only *after* we reassert control over immigration. Enforcement first.

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George Soros—
a 527 kinda guy

■ POLITICS ■

To Stifle or To Compete

That is the question of 527s

BYRON YORK

In June 2005, after the last financial-disclosure reports from the 2004 election had been filed and the final totals calculated, a group of Republican insiders gathered in a conference room at the National Republican Senatorial Committee's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The pollsters, politicians, lawyers, and lobbyists had been asked to come by Pennsylvania Republican senator Rick Santorum, who wanted them to hear how the GOP, while winning the presidency, the House, and the Senate, had nevertheless lost—big time: the 2004 fundraising contest for contributions to "527" organizations, those anything-goes groups that allowed financier George Soros to spend more than $24 million of his own money in the drive to defeat George W. Bush.

The group listened as Cleta Mitchell, a lawyer and campaign-finance expert, presented her study of 2004 financing. Mitchell began by showing how well the Republican party had performed in raising money the old-fashioned way: in so-called hard-money contributions to party committees. In 2004, the three big Republican committees—the Republican National Committee, the National Republican Senatorial Committee, and the National Republican Congressional Committee—out-raised the comparable Democratic committees by a huge amount: Republicans brought in $898 million, Democrats $679 million.

That was the good news. The bad news came when Mitchell described the contributions to groups outside the parties, especially the 527s. Of the ten biggest 527s in 2004, Mitchell explained, seven were pro-Democrat. Of the top twenty, she said, 15 were pro-Democrat. Those 15 pro-Democrat groups raised $359,338,378. The five pro-GOP groups raised $85,363,370. That disparity alone more than erased the GOP's lead in hard-money fundraising.

Mitchell explained that the Democratic lead did not come from any massive grassroots enthusiasm for the party; rather, individual Democrats like Soros—along with colleagues such as insurance magnate Peter Lewis and Hollywood mogul Stephen Bing—were simply more willing to put up large amounts than were individual Republicans. Of the top ten individual donors to 527s, six were Democrats, who gave a total of $82,576,110. The four Republicans in the top ten gave $22,685,199—and many of them gave only after becoming alarmed at the astonishing sums Democrats were giving.

In 2004, of course, Republicans had the formidable advantage of an incumbent in the White House. But in the future, Mitchell said, outside spending might well determine elections. "I said we're all playing the same game, but it's like baseball," Mitchell recalls. "Democrats play the political game under American League rules. Their 'designated hitter' is the vast web of outside groups. Republicans play the political game under National League rules, within the party and the candidate campaigns." There were two possibilities to level the field: Republicans could try to stop the 527s—to impose McCain-Feingold-style contribution limits on

ROMAN GENN

Mr. York is NR's White House correspondent, and the author of *The Vast Left Wing Conspiracy: The Untold Story of How Democratic Operatives, Eccentric Billionaires, Liberal Activists, and Assorted Celebrities Tried to Bring Down a President—and Why They'll Try Even Harder Next Time.*

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them—or they could leave 527s alone, get in the game, work hard, and catch up. Today, nine months later, the GOP is close to making its decision.

Advocates of the first course are being led by—no surprise—Sen. John McCain. He blames the Federal Election Commission for failing to rein in 527s in the last presidential race, and in early March he unveiled a formal proposal that would limit contributions to 527s to $25,000 per person per year. That means Soros's $24 million would be cut to $50,000 in the next two-year cycle. McCain's Senate proposal is supported by a similar measure in the House sponsored by Connecticut Republican Christopher Shays.

But it is in the House that another GOP plan has emerged, one cosponsored by the solid conservative Indiana Republican Mike Pence and the equally solid liberal Maryland Democrat Albert Wynn. Pence and Wynn would impose some new restrictions on 527s, mostly along the lines of requiring them to report contributions quickly and openly. But they would not impose any limits on contributions. And they would go a step farther: In a bid to restore influence to the traditional parties, they would repeal the limits on the total amount of money any donor can give in a two-year political cycle. Current law allows individuals to give $2,100 to a candidate in any given year, or $4,200 per cycle. It also caps individual contributions to a party committee at $26,700 per year. Those restrictions are well known. What is less well known is that the law also limits the total amount of *all* contributions any one person may give. That limit is indexed for inflation, and right now stands at $101,400—a combination of $40,000 for federal candidates and $61,400 for party committees.

What Pence and Wynn would do is remove that aggregate limit without touching the individual limits. So, under their plan, if a donor this year wanted to give the maximum $2,100 to all 231 Republican members of the House and all 15 Republicans up for reelection in the Senate, he would be free to do so. If he wanted to give the maximum allowed to each of the party committees, he would be able to do that as well. No individual giving limit would be broken, but the person's aggregate contribution would be much higher than allowed in the past.

It's far short of a repeal of McCain-Feingold, but it's a small step in the direction of giving donors more freedom and the political parties more support. And Pence sees doing that, and leaving 527s untouched, as real progress: "To the extent that 527s have found an effective way to participate in the American political process with greater freedom than the major political parties and outside organizations, then, rather than restrain the 527s, we should give greater freedom to political parties and outside organizations."

Republicans could try to stop the 527s, or they could leave 527s alone, get in the game, work hard, and catch up.

For Republicans, the choice might seem easy; Pence-Wynn is a clear move away from the steadily increasing regulation of political expression. Yet many in the GOP—actually, most in the GOP—are instead leaning in McCain's direction. And the reason is not any principled belief in campaign-finance reform, but rather the fear that Democrats will use 527s to beat the hell out of Republicans in 2006 and 2008. GOP House aides who follow the situation believe that most House Republicans would vote for limits on 527s. And a key Senate aide says that a very large number—perhaps all—of the Senate's Republicans would support limits, and do it for nakedly political reasons. "Republican members believe that 527s are a bad thing, gnawing away at the vitals of our majority, and that what McCain supports means their elimination," the aide says. "No doubt the bad guys will just find another section of the tax code to abuse for anonymous giving and deadly attacks against Republicans, but for now, since Republicans don't like them, and McCain is scared to death about what they could do against him come primary time in '08, there's a marriage of convenience underway."

It would be an understatement to say that Republicans who oppose regulation on principle find the current situation dis-

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heartening. "From a conservative standpoint, it's clearly wrong to jump on the regulatory bandwagon for what's perceived as short-term partisan gain," says Bradley Smith, the former FEC chairman, who has been one of McCain-Feingold's most forceful critics. Adds Cleta Mitchell: "The thing that is so discouraging is that my party, which opposed McCain-Feingold, has become the party that throws in with the guys who want to regulate everything. It just gives me a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach."

Talking with Mike Pence, one gets the sense he agrees but has to be a bit more diplomatic toward his fellow lawmakers. "There are many of my colleagues who are experiencing withering daily assaults from the 527s," he says. "They have been brought to the place where practical politics and principle collide." And in many cases, practical politics is winning.

Of course, it's not as if there is much principle on the other side. These days, Democrats who long championed McCain-Feingold's restrictions are adamantly opposed to extending them to 527s. New York's Charles Schumer, once a strong reformer and now head of the Democrats' Senate election effort, has cooled on the idea of cracking down on 527s.

It is entirely possible that more regulation is on the way. But ultimately, all the fears over 527 spending might be exaggerated. When analysts of both parties look back at the groups' activities in 2004, they see two major examples: the giant, Soros-funded, pro-Democrat turnout group called America Coming Together, and the smaller anti-Kerry operation Swift Boat Veterans for Truth. Which was more effective? It's hard to deny that the Swift Boat Vets got perhaps the biggest bang for their buck in political-advertising history. Most of that bang came at the very beginning, when the group had a relatively small amount of money. "At the time we filmed our first commercial, our total expenditure was around $350,000," recalls John O'Neill, the group's most visible leader. That $350,000 included $100,000 each from supporters T. Boone Pickens and Bob Perry, the kind of donation that would be banned under McCain's proposal. The relatively meager $350,000 paid for everything—for organizing, for travel, for a website, for producing the initial commercial, and for buying its airtime. Later, when the message caught on, millions in small donations came pouring in. But the Swift Boat Vets were never more effective than when their first ad aired. In contrast, America Coming Together started with zillions of dollars, which it never learned how to spend efficiently and effectively. It poured mind-boggling amounts of money into Ohio, and lost.

Strangling 527s not only would run against Republican belief in freedom of expression, but would make it harder to score targeted political points in coming campaigns.

So what is the lesson? That 527s should be strangled? Doing so not only would run against Republican belief in freedom of expression, but would make it harder to score targeted political points in coming campaigns. That's something Republicans might come to regret in 2008 if they find themselves in a race against a certain senator from New York who was once a First Lady enmeshed in numerous scandals. "There are huge numbers of voters in America who have no knowledge of Travelgate, cattle futures, the whole thing," says Bradley Smith. "Who's going to talk about that for Republicans? Are they counting on CBS to do it?"

These days, however, Republicans seem more than willing to shut down the 527s. In the end, it is impossible to say whether 527 regulation would hurt or benefit either Democrats or Republicans. But it is possible to say that it would be yet another step in the wrong direction for political speech. "We are on the road to serfdom in American politics with campaign-finance reform," says Mike Pence. "We are eventually going to end up on the doorstep of George Soros's house, telling him what he can and cannot say." And not just Soros: T. Boone Pickens and Bob Perry, too. Republicans and Democrats alike. NR

■ POLITICS II

Bush Is Your Soft Drink

Republicans 'distance' themselves at their peril

KATE O'BEIRNE

George W. Bush's sagging approval ratings have been accompanied, not coincidentally, by an increasing amount of criticism from his allies in Congress. But while some Republicans have decided that it's time to declare independence from the White House, other party strategists have a warning: If Bush sinks too deep into lame-duck territory now, we will see a large flock of GOP dead ducks in the upcoming election season.

Bush's poll numbers are undeniably poor. In a mid-March Pew Research Center survey, only 33 percent of respondents approved of the president's job performance, down from 50 percent a year ago. Bush's ratings on the handling of specific issues have also declined significantly, with only 42 percent now approving of the way Bush is handling the threat of terrorism. That's down 11 percent from mid-February. The poll also reports that negative descriptions of the president now outnumber positive ones, with "incompetent" topping the list at 29 percent, and "honest" slipping to 14 percent. Even more alarmingly, much of the erosion of Bush's support has come from his political base. In the last year, his approval among conservative Republicans has dropped by 16 points. Among people who voted for him in 2004, it has fallen by 24 points.

Many congressional Republicans are among the disenchanted. "Arrogant" and "insular" lead the list of adjectives that Republicans in Congress volunteer when

Kate O'Beirne is NR's Washington editor, and the author of *Women Who Make the World Worse, and How Their Radical Feminist Assault Is Ruining Our Schools, Families, Military, and Sports.*

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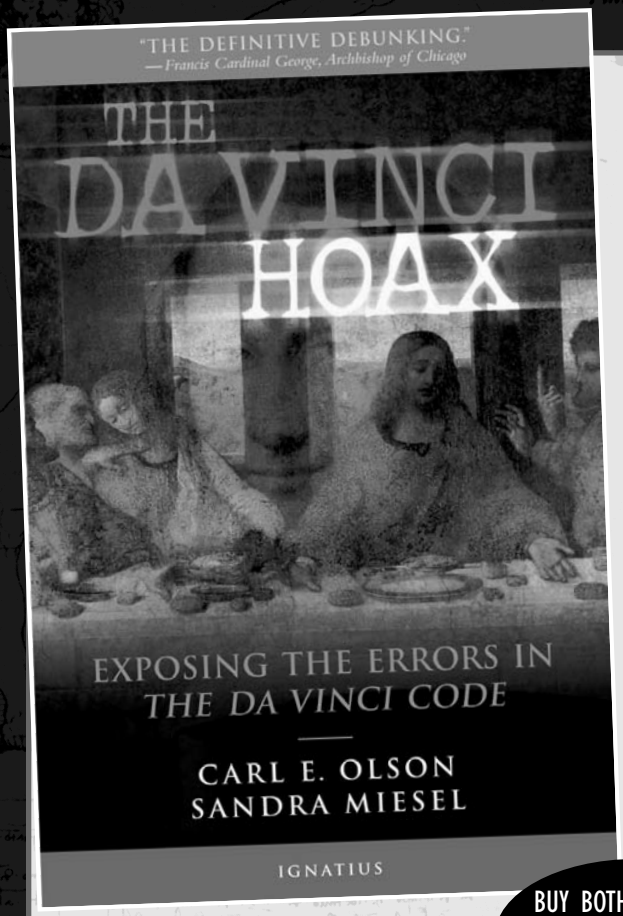

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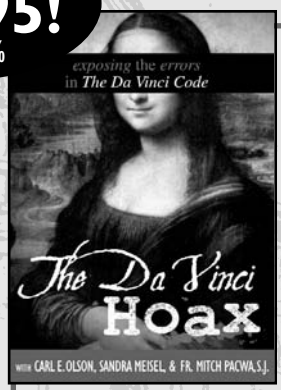

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asked to describe what ails the White House. They recount the sluggish response to Hurricane Katrina, the doomed nomination of Harriet Miers, the backbiting following the Cheney shooting incident, and the defiant, tone-deaf response to congressional objections over the Dubai ports deal.

A common criticism holds that the Bush administration has become more insular over time as departing officials have been replaced by less experienced junior staffers. One congressional critic echoes a common criticism of the White House's hiring policy. "Unless you get in on the ground floor, you can't get on the elevator. You can't penetrate the White House unless you have been there from the very beginning." An administration ally adds, "There are only so many times you can promote the deputy's deputy without paying a price in competency."

Like a troubled marriage, the latest spat between the White House and congressional Republicans reflects longstanding, unresolved problems. A Senate leadership aide says that when the president himself deals with Republican senators, they often "come out of the meeting ready to eat out of his hand." But this personal charm is quickly dispelled by other administration officials, who regularly come off as patronizing and highhanded. The Senate aide summarizes the message that these officials convey: "You can come to the White House mess and kiss the ring and tell us what you can do for us." This alienates Republican staffers on Capitol Hill, who decry the imperious attitude that they get from the White House: "This is what the president wants. You need to get with the program."

One veteran House aide puts it succinctly: "The Republicans are *so* over this White House."

In the *Daily News*, Tom DeFrank argues that this attitude is good politics. "Distancing themselves from a polarizing President whose job-approval rating hits 40% on a good day is shrewd electoral positioning," he writes. David Keene, chairman of the American Conservative Union, similarly advises Republicans in *The Hill* newspaper that they need to "get their act together." What does he have in mind? "The president's approval rating seems to have tanked," he writes, "but why would Republican voters take their frustration with him out on their congressman or senator when most of them are doing just about all they can do to put just a little distance between themselves and the White House?" As Tim Russert reports, "Congressional Republicans are panicked and petrified. . . . They are going to separate themselves from the president on a regular basis if it helps them politically."

Yet while Republicans are undeniably at odds with the administration, it remains a big "if" as to whether abandoning their president will actually boost their electoral prospects in the fall. When the president took an unpopular stand in support of the Dubai ports deal, congressional Republicans revolted along with the majority of the American public. A CBS poll showed that 70 percent of Americans opposed the president's stance, while the Pew poll found that 58 percent of Americans approved of the way that Congress was standing up to the president. But this instance of congressional defiance did little to boost Congress's overall standing with the public.

A CBS poll has found that only 28 percent of the public now approves of the job Congress is doing—even lower than the 34 percent approval for President Bush. In fact, that's the lowest congressional approval rating in a decade. And while 22 percent of Republican voters disapprove of the president's job performance, 59 percent of them disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job. The public has an equally low opinion of congressional Democrats, but, according to an NBC survey, more people now prefer Democratic control of Congress by a margin of 50 to 37 percent.

RNC chairman Ken Mehlman, a veteran House aide and former White House political director, reminds Republicans that over the past six years their fortunes have been closely tied to Bush's. He cites a chart of their approval ratings since the beginning of the president's first term showing two lines rising and falling in tandem, with Bush's consistently higher. Mehlman explains that President Bush is the inescapable symbol of the Republican party. "More Diet Coke won't be sold if the public decides Coke is a bad product—more Pepsi will be sold," he points out.

Dave Sackett, a veteran GOP pollster at the Tarrance Group, echoes this point in a recent strategy memo to the RNC: "The notion that an individual incumbent or candidate can 'insulate' themselves from generic backlash against the Administration or the Congressional leadership by adopting a fundamental image development strategy that focuses on these differences is false."

Democratic strategist Mark Mellman believes that '06 "will be a great year for Democrats" if present trends continue. He acknowledges that improved presidential ratings would spell trouble for Democratic candidates, saying, "The difference between going into an election with 34 percent and 48 percent is real."

Republican turnout in congressional elections has always been intimately connected to the general level of party enthusiasm that Republicans have felt on Election Day.

Experts agree that turnout will determine the outcome in the upcoming elections, and Republican turnout in congressional elections has always been intimately connected to the general level of party enthusiasm that Republicans have felt on Election Day. The biggest difference between the best years (1994 and 2002) and the worst years (1974 and 1982) for GOP congressional candidates is the number of Republicans who turned up at the polls. Vin Weber recalls that, in 1982, pollster Richard Wirthlin was emphatically telling Republican candidates, "The only thing that matters to you is Ronald Reagan's approval rating." "And he was right," Weber adds.

No matter how valid or strongly felt their criticisms of Bush, the challenge for Republican congressional candidates is to energize a unified base. To do this, they must first realize that the key to their success—strong Republican voter turnout—is bound up with Bush's popularity. On this basis, experience teaches that only a rising tide of approval for President Bush will lift all GOP boats. **NR**

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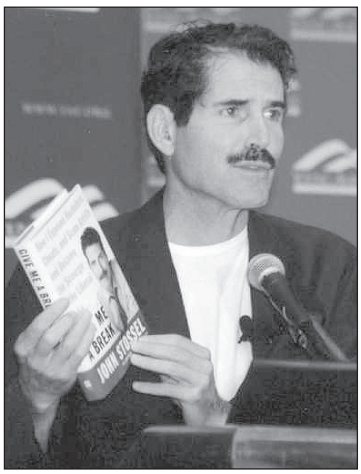

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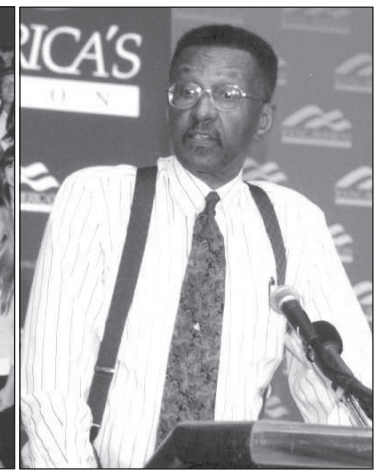

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■ POLITICS III

Every Man's Burden

Will the Voting Rights Act be necessary . . . forever?

JOHN J. MILLER

"THERE has been a transformation," said Democratic congressman John Lewis of Georgia four years ago. "It's a different state, it's a different political climate, it's a different political environment. It's altogether a different world we live in." Lewis was trying to explain why a congressional redistricting plan, drawn up by Democrats in Atlanta, was permissible under the Voting Rights Act. His argument, in essence, was that the Georgia of the 21st century was not the Georgia of the 1960s. "We've come a great distance," he said. "It's not just in Georgia, but in the American South I think people are preparing to lay down the burden of race."

He was certainly right about that, especially with respect to his own state. When Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in 1965, little more than a quarter of Georgia's black population was registered to vote, and only a handful of blacks held elective office. But today, as Lewis said, it's an altogether different world: By the 1990s, black registration in Georgia roughly equaled white rates, and in several elections—most notably those of 2000 and 2004—blacks have been slightly more likely than whites to show up at the polls. And black politicians have enjoyed considerable success: Four serve in Congress, 50 have seats in the state legislature, and more than 600 hold local office. Significantly, of the 34 statewide elected offices in Georgia, nine are currently held by blacks, including that of the attorney general.

So it might seem that, over the course of four decades, the Voting Rights Act has accomplished what it set out to do—and that perhaps the time has finally come to phase out some of its most drastic provisions, which were once advertised as "temporary" measures necessary for confronting a civil-rights "emergency." As it happens, many of these are scheduled to expire next year. Yet almost nobody in Congress has shown a desire to make the act conform to modern realities. Instead, there's a headlong rush among both Democrats and Republicans to reauthorize it for another 25 years, and to do so before this fall's elections. As Rep. James Sensenbrenner, a Wisconsin Republican and chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, told last summer's NAACP convention: "The Voting Rights Act must continue to exist—and exist in its current form."

There are actually several problems with the current form of the Voting Rights Act. One of the most important is known as "preclearance," which basically means that the Department of Justice micromanages voting rules across the South, as well as in a handful of other places (e.g., New York City). "If a little town wants to move a polling place from a Catholic church on one side of the street to a Baptist church on the other, it has to seek permission from the federal government," says Rep. Lynn Westmoreland, a Georgia Republican who is waging a lonely fight against a rubber-stamp reauthorization. "That's ridiculous. Parts of this law have outlived their usefulness." That's an extraordinarily brave thing to say—and Westmoreland gets almost nothing but grief for it. In a column for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* last year, Representative Lewis accused Westmoreland of engaging in "the politics of misinformation" and of "slinging unsubstantiated claims."

Almost nobody in Congress has shown a desire to make the Voting Rights Act conform to modern realities.

Yet it is primarily liberals who have trafficked in false claims about the Voting Rights Act. Shortly before the 2004 elections, for instance, the NAACP branch in Tacoma, Wash., sent out a newsletter that declared: "In the year 2007 we [i.e., black Americans] could lose the Right to vote!" This is of course a stupendous misreading of what's at stake—the right to vote for all Americans, regardless of race, is a constitutional guarantee—but it's exactly the kind of demagoguery that tends to boost turnout. Unfortunately, the Tacoma NAACP branch's propaganda is no isolated incident: The notion that blacks are about to lose the right to vote has become something of an urban legend. In 1998, Camille Cosby, wife of Bill, published an op-ed piece in *USA Today*. She wrote that in 2007 "Congress once again will decide whether African-Americans will be allowed to vote. No other Americans are subjected to this oppressive nonsense." White House counsel Harriet Miers waded into the controversy during an online discussion a year and a half ago, when "Jeannie, from Tampa," asked whether "the right for African Americans to vote will expire in 2007." Miers assured her that indeed it would not, but also mentioned that "the Department of Justice has received numerous inquiries concerning [this] rumor." DOJ actually has a page on its website dedicated to debunking this myth. So does the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Even when these misconceptions are cleared up, reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act remains a sacred cow. Consider Jack Kemp's testimony before the House last fall: "All who care about social justice and equal opportunity in America share one overriding goal: that Congress needs to renew the provisions of the Voting Rights Act, which are coming up for reauthorization." That's an amazing statement, one that essentially slanders anybody who disagrees with the political agenda of the liberal civil-rights organizations that tend to support the act most strongly. Efforts to change the law have gone nowhere, according to the American Enterprise Institute's Edward Blum, who is, along with the Manhattan Institute's Abigail Thernstrom and the Center for Equal Opportunity's Roger Clegg, a leading voice of reform. The problem goes beyond the Left's demagoguery: There's also the Right's political problem. For Republicans, uncritical support for the Voting Rights Act has become a way to prove the GOPs race credibility. It's no secret that Republican congressional leaders would like to reauthorize the law before November—well ahead of next year's August deadline—so that their col-

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leagues may tout it on the campaign trail this fall.

As if that weren't cynical enough, many Republicans view the Voting Rights Act as a tool of their own political ascendancy because it has led to the creation of "majority-minority districts," especially in the South. "It broke up the monopoly of white Democrats who drew congressional districts for themselves and it led to the election of more black Democrats *and* more Republicans," says Rep. Tom Feeney, a Florida Republican who supports reauthorization. "I think it was as important as the Contract with America in making 1994 possible." (In that year, the GOP gained control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years.)

It's a simple fact that there are both more blacks and more Republicans in Congress today to some extent because these two groups have conspired to create congressional maps that ensure the election of as many black politicians as possible. Packing black voters into majority-minority districts—often through the brazen use of racial gerrymandering—has had the effect of removing an overwhelmingly loyal group of Democrats from other districts. These in turn have become more conservative, and thus have elected more Republicans. Gone are the days when moderate white Democrats from the South brokered political agreements between the Left and Right; that species is near extinction. This may be a vital but unrecognized factor in the oft-cited breakdown of civility in Washington's political culture.

Another clearly observable effect of these "max black" districts is that most seats are safe, and almost never see competitive general elections. The Supreme Court, for its part, has frowned on some of this race-driven redistricting, but ultimately its jurisprudence on this matter is such a confusing mess that the practice is bound to continue, as will the litigation that always accompanies it.

A separate section of the Voting Rights Act that frustrates conservatives is the requirement of foreign-language ballots in jurisdictions with large populations of non-English speakers. Whereas preclearance and gerrymandering are supposed to combat a receding factor in American life (racism), the language rules are meant to benefit immigrants whose numbers are rising. The paradox here is that most immigrant voters are supposed to possess a functional level of English—it's a requirement of naturalization (except for certain older immigrants). Demanding ballots in other languages leads to all sorts of headaches: A recent report by English First, a pro-English advocacy organization, documents everything from the high cost of this unfunded mandate to basic translation problems. At a voting site in Flushing, N.Y., for example, the Chinese ballots referred to the Republicans as Democrats and vice versa. This kind of gaffe of course leads to allegations of fraud, as well as lawsuits.

"The challenges of compliance are enormous," says Jim Boulet, one of the report's authors. "In Los Angeles County alone, these arcane rules must be applied to at least 5,000 individual precincts. As others have pointed out, that's about how many Starbucks coffee shops there are in America." The difference, of course, is that when a Starbucks customer asks for a grande latte and gets a venti cappuccino instead, he can't make a federal case out of it. By contrast, liberal civil-rights groups send out monitors whose job is to do just that. Rep. Steve King, an Iowa Republican, hopes to reform some of this by offering amendments to the Voting Rights Act, but he knows that he faces long odds. "I'm going to go against the wishes of some in my party's leadership," he says. "When I look at these non-English ballots, though, it just seems like they're meant to divide Americans and drive wedges through us."

BETTMANN/CORBIS

Lester Maddox:
No longer the governor of Georgia

Despite the best efforts of conservative House members like King and Westmoreland, the most likely revisions to the Voting Rights Act will be to make it worse rather than better. There will probably be an effort to amend the law to make it even easier to redistrict based on race. And if Democrats are feeling especially confident, they may try to require states to grant voting rights to felons, who in many states are banned from the ballot box. Liberals view the enfranchisement of this group as a potential bonanza. (If felons had been allowed to vote in Florida in 2000, Al Gore probably would have been elected president.)

The problem for liberals is that they may overreach: There is the political risk of standing up for the rights of criminals, as well as the legal risk of supporting a law whose current elements may not even pass constitutional muster—not to mention any potential expansion. Why, for instance, don't the most controversial sections of the Voting Rights Act apply to the whole country, as opposed to just the South and a few other jurisdictions? Lawmakers from the rest of the country certainly don't want the added burden of an expanded Voting Rights Act, and their reluctance could trigger a series of legal challenges. Although several of the Supreme Court's recent decisions on civil rights have disappointed conservatives—especially the University of Michigan case involving race preferences—the addition of Justice Sam Alito may have tipped the balance to the right. It's possible to hope that the courts will force Congress, at long last, to do as Representative Lewis said, and "lay down the burden of race." **NR**

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By Richard Huemer, M.D.

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■ COVER STORY

The Threat Saddam Posed

A dictator and his WMD

JAMES LACEY

For almost three years, the anti-war protesters have kept up the drumbeat: "Bush lied and people died." Because weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were not found in Iraq, an endless stream of commentators continues to declare that Saddam Hussein was not the serious threat the administration claimed him to be. The critics usually go even further, and assert that sanctions and the destruction of WMD facilities by U.N. investigators had done so much damage to WMD infrastructure that it would have taken Saddam years to rebuild it even to a minimal capacity.

But these claims ignore huge amounts of contrary evidence; and most of this evidence can be found in the final report of the Iraqi Survey Group (ISG)—the very same report that many critics hold up as proof positive that Iraq was not a WMD threat. The evidence found by the ISG (an investigative commission set up by the Bush administration after the invasion of Iraq) confirms that Saddam was preparing to rapidly reconstitute his WMD program the moment he broke out of sanctions, which—given the frayed state of the coalition against him—would inevitably have happened. Not only did Bush not "lie"; the critics themselves are guilty of selectively citing evidence and of ignoring facts inconvenient to their argument. The ISG report, as well as the other evidence that continues to come to light, demonstrates that Saddam couldn't be trusted with the apparatus of a modern state, which he would have turned quickly back to producing WMD as soon as circumstances allowed.

Consider just one datum: According to the report, Saddam had the capability to start anthrax production within one week of making the decision to do so, and thereafter to produce *over ten tons* of weaponized anthrax a year. If even 1 percent of that amount—200 pounds—were released into the air over Washington, D.C., Congress's Office of Technology Assessment estimates that up to 3 million people would die.

How did Saddam keep such a massive capability from being discovered by the inspectors? Simply by hiding it in plain sight. For instance, at a facility called al-Hakam, Dr. Rihab Rashid Taha al-Azawi maintained a production line that produced ten tons of biopesticides for agricultural use each year. These biopesticides were produced in powder form and milled to 1 to 10 microns in size—but bio agents milled this finely are absolutely useless for agricultural purposes. Farmers found the biopesticide Dr. Rihab was sending them almost impossible to use, as it had to be hand-dropped one plant at a time or it would disappear. When they followed her recommendation to mix it with water and spray it, all they got was a thick slurry that clogged spray nozzles.

Though such finely milled powder may be useless for agricultural work, it is the perfect size for an inhalation bioweapon. (To be effective, anthrax must be milled at less then 10 microns.) Experts estimate that weaponized-anthrax spores that infect the skin will kill 50 percent of untreated patients; inhaled anthrax will kill 100 percent of untreated victims and 50 percent of those receiving immediate treatment. Simulations prior to Desert Storm estimated that an anthrax attack would kill over 25 percent of Coalition forces, as many as 200,000 men. In the hands of terrorists, this would be a weapon of incalculable value.

Dr. Rihab, the supposed agricultural scientist, is better known to U.S. intelligence agencies as "Dr. Germ," the head of Saddam's biological-warfare program for most of the decade immediately preceding the invasion. A 1999 Defense Intelligence Agency report called her the most dangerous woman in the world, and others have testified that she used political prisoners to test her bioweapons when she began to doubt she was getting accurate data from infected donkeys and dogs. When questioned by U.N. inspectors about al-Hakam, she claimed it was a chicken-feed

Mr. Lacey is a Washington-based writer focusing on defense and foreign-policy issues.

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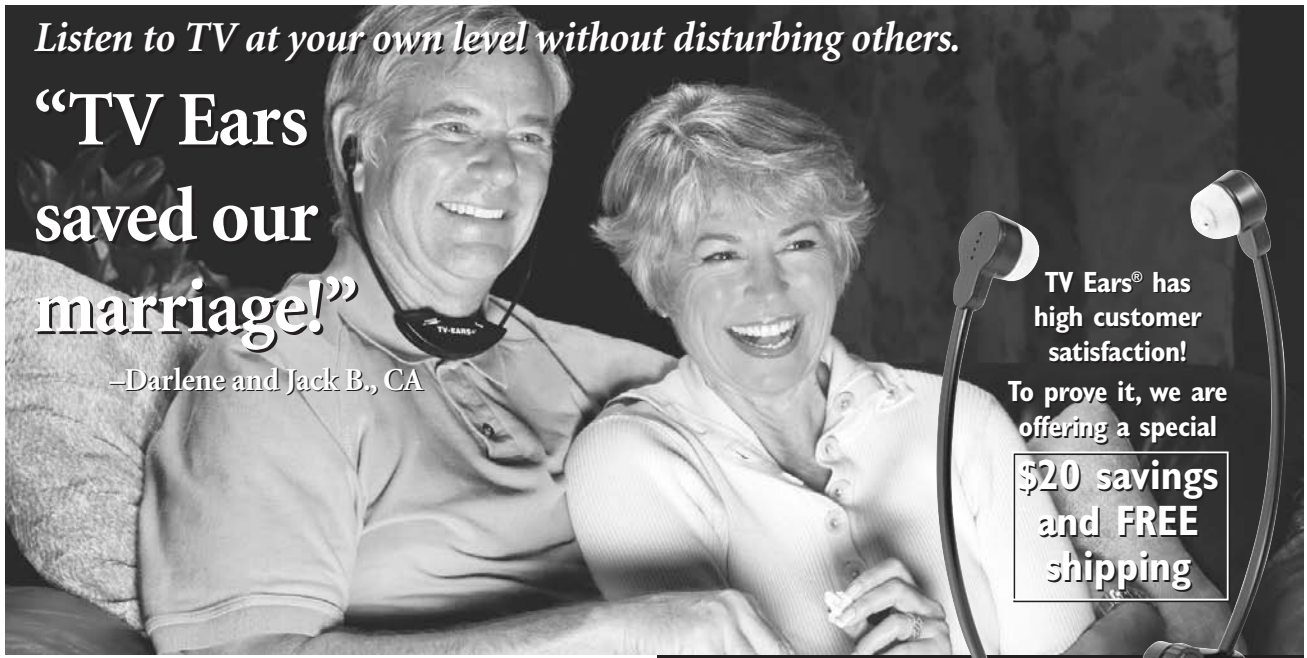

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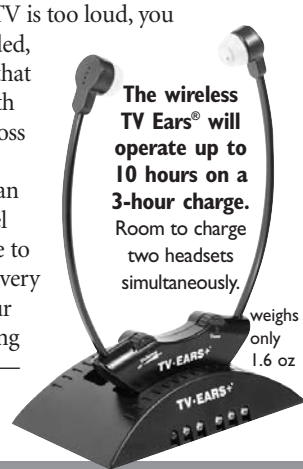

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plant. (Charles Duelfer, deputy executive chairman for the U.N. inspection team, later told reporters, "There were a few things that were peculiar about this animal-feed production plant, beginning with the extensive air defenses surrounding it.") According to the 1999 DIA report, the normally mild-mannered Rihab exploded into violent rages when questioned about al-Hakam, shouting, screaming, and, on one occasion, storming out of the room, before returning and smashing a chair.

In 1995, the U.N. inspectors showed Rihab documents obtained from the Israelis that demonstrated that Iraq had purchased ten tons of growth media from a British company called Oxoid. Shown this evidence, Rihab admitted to the inspectors that she had grown 19,000 liters of botulism toxin; 8,000 liters of anthrax; 2,000 liters of aflatoxins, which can cause liver cancer; clostridium perfringens, a bacterium that can cause gas gangrene; and ricin, a castor-bean derivative that can kill by impeding circulation. She also admitted conducting research into cholera, salmonella, foot-and-mouth disease, and camel pox. Neither the U.N. nor later inspectors were able to certify that all of this lethal cornucopia was ever destroyed.

In fact, in a document declassified just recently, there are indications that these deadly organisms—and the infrastructure to create them—were *not* destroyed. According to this document, persons at the highest levels of the regime were convinced that Iraq had eliminated its entire biological-weapons program: In a mid-1990s conference of Saddam's Revolutionary Command Council, Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz told Saddam Hussein that he expected to resolve all biological issues with U.N. inspectors very quickly, because the program no longer existed. But Aziz was immediately contradicted by Saddam's son-in-law, who reminded Saddam that not everything had been disclosed, not even to supposedly trusted members of the regime's inner circle:

> Some teams work and no one knows of them. Sir, they [U.N. investigators] do not know all of the methods or all of the means nor all of the scientists nor all of the places. Frankly, yes, some activities were discovered . . . Sir, what they have discovered in the biological file is the least and most insignificant concern. The 17 tons [the amount of biological growth medium imported into Iraq] are not the problem, but the thousands of tons we have not accounted for or told how they were produced or how they were used . . . Sir, I would like to go back to this subject [biological weapons]: Do we have to reveal everything? If we continued with the silence and if the meeting took this line, I must say that it is in our interest not to reveal anything.

It is clear from the remainder of this transcript—a document captured by U.S. forces—that Tariq Aziz is both startled and angry to discover that Saddam has been keeping him in the dark about continuing WMD programs even as he tries to convince U.N. inspectors that no such programs still exist. It was not until Saddam's son-in-law defected in August 1995 that the U.N. was alerted to the fact that Iraq's biological program was far greater than they believed. But by this time Saddam was close to throwing the inspectors out—before they could uncover and dismantle the program in its entirety.

The ISG report goes out of its way to understate its WMD findings, but the underlying facts are duly alarming. For instance, the report goes on at great length about Iraq's attempts to import super-high-quality aluminum tubes in 2001–2003. At the time, this was cited by Western intelligence agencies as evidence that Saddam was trying to reconstitute his WMD program. The agencies claimed that the tubes were intended to be used to build centrifuges for nuclear enrichment. The Iraqis maintained, however, that the tubes were for 81mm rockets and had nothing to do with WMD. The ISG report accepts this explanation, even though it notes that Iraq was producing 50 lower-quality tubes a day for its 81mm rockets, and had no need for the expensive higher-quality imported tubes. The report also states that an Iraqi general, Husam Muhammad Amin, became worried about repeated attempts to purchase aluminum tubes that were subject to U.N. nuclear controls and took his concerns to Abdullah Mullah al-Huwaysh (deputy prime minister and head of the Military Industrial Commission). Nonetheless, Iraq persisted in its attempts to purchase the high-grade aluminum tubes and a contract was still being negotiated as Coalition tanks rolled into Baghdad.

The Iraqi Survey Group goes out of its way to understate its WMD findings, but the underlying facts are duly alarming.

MOBILE DEATH FACTORIES

The ISG report dedicates an entire annex—20 pages of exhaustive analysis—to proving that the two suspected mobile bio-labs were not what Secretary of State Colin Powell claimed they were, before the U.N., in the run-up to war. But the report gives the discovery of Iraq's *actual* mobile bioweapons labs only a little over one page of attention.

After the 1995 defection of Saddam's son-in-law forced Iraq to admit to an extensive bioweapons program that it had been hiding, U.N. inspectors made an effort to eliminate it. But Saddam was not ready to give up all he had gained, and large portions of the bioweapons research program were continued in small mobile labs by a band of key scientists and technicians under the auspices of the Iraqi Intelligence Service. The ISG report says its investigators were unsure if any of this continuing bioweapons research was military-related. (No one ever bothered to ask the investigators if there was any *other* conceivable purpose for bioweapons.)

The ISG found evidence that at least five mobile bioweapons research labs were operating in Baghdad right up to the commencement of the Coalition invasion. At one site, which building residents claimed was a biological lab, investigators found chemicals, along with documents from lab employees asking for hazardous-duty pay for having to work with biological materials.

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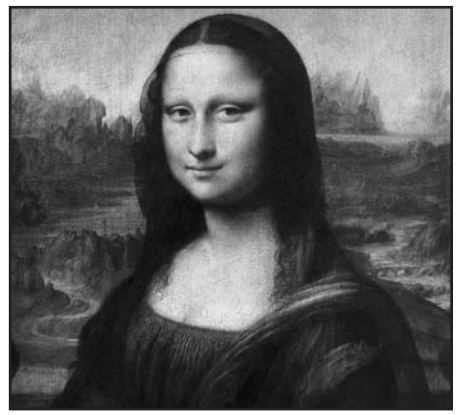

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Mona Lisa, by Leonardo da Vinci

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Another lab, discovered in a Baghdad mosque, was filled with equipment belonging to a known bioweapons scientist. Still another clandestine lab was identified by the ISG team at the Baghdad Central Public Health Laboratory, which employees admitted was operated by the Intelligence Service for several years prior to 2003.

According to the ISG report, Samarra Drug Industries had tanks available for bio-agent production ranging from 100 to 10,000 liters that could have begun bioweapons production three to four weeks after the order was given. Just one of these 10,000-liter tanks, if filled with botulinum toxin, would be enough to wipe out the global population more than twice over.

And it could be worse: Even a thimbleful of smallpox germs would kill tens of millions. If smallpox were released by terrorists in the United States, where inoculations ceased in 1972, the result would be a disaster of almost unimaginable magnitude. With some estimates claiming that each infected person can infect between 10 and 17 others, the smallpox germ is the bioweapon of choice for terrorists. Given Saddam's close links to terror groups it would have been sheer folly to allow his regime to possess even the smallest capability to produce the germ.

The report states that the ISG found evidence that Iraq had in fact obtained smallpox cultures from the former Soviet Union in 1992. An Iraqi scientist also described for the ISG Iraq's efforts to develop smallpox for biological warfare by using eggs and viral cultures. ISG investigators visited two labs where they found equipment that appeared to be used for making animal vaccines, but "this dual-use equipment was assessed to be easily diverted to produce smallpox or other pathogenic viruses." The ISG also visited a location where animal pox vaccines were produced in tissue culture; its assessment was that this equipment could be used for the rapid production of large amounts of smallpox virus.

The ISG report states in bold font that investigators "uncovered no evidence to support smallpox R&D at ASVI [Al-Amiriyah Serum and Vaccine] Institute for possible use as an offensive BW agent." Since this was the only facility in Iraq previously known to be associated with smallpox, the ISG's declaration that no biowarfare research was being conducted there would seem to give the institute a clear bill of health. But the report also says that Dr. Rihab (a.k.a. Dr. Germ) made frequent visits to the institute to conduct unidentified biological-warfare research, and that the institute maintained a "small capability" for organic production; it needs to be stressed that when it comes to smallpox, you need only a very small amount to cause a catastrophic amount of damage.

A TYRANT'S DESIGNS

In summary, then, what the Iraqi Survey Group discovered was that Saddam was maintaining a biological-warfare research program right up to the Coalition invasion, and that he had the installed capability to produce bio-toxins. Would he have used them? An amazing conversation between Saddam and his inner circle was recorded in a captured but undated Iraqi document.

SADDAM: I want to make sure that—close the door please (door slams)—the germ and chemical warheads, as well as the chemical and germ bombs, are available to [those concerned], so that in case we ordered an attack, they can do it without missing any of their targets?

HUSAYN KAMIL: Sir, if you'll allow me. Some of the chemicals now are distributed, this is according to the last report from the Minister of Defense, which was submitted to you, Sir. Chemical warheads are stored and are ready at Air Bases, and they know how and when to deal with, as well as arm these heads. Also, some other artillery machines and rockets (missiles) are available from the army. While some of the empty "stuff" is available for us, our position is very good, and we don't have any operational problems. Moreover, in the past, many substantial items and material were imported; now, we were able to establish a local project, which was established to comply with daily production. Also, another bigger project will be finalized within a month, as well as a third project in the coming two to three months that will keep us on the safe side, in terms of supply. We, Sir, only deal in common materials like phosphorus, ethyl alcohol, and methyl (interrupted) . . .

SADDAM: What is it doing with you, I need these germs to be fixed on the missiles, and tell him to hit, because starting the 15th, everyone should be ready for the action to happen at anytime, and I consider Riyadh as a target . . .

HUSAYN KAMIL: (door slams) Sir, we have three types of germ weapons, but we have to decide which one we should use, some types stay capable for many years (interrupted).

SADDAM: We want the long term, the many years kind . . .

HUSAYN KAMIL: . . . There has to be a decision about which method of attack we use; a missile, a fighter bomb, or a fighter plane.

SADDAM: With them all, all the methods . . . I want as soon as possible, if we are not transferring the weapons, to issue a clear order to [those concerned] that the weapon should be in their hands as soon as possible. I might even give them a "non-return access." *[Translator Comment: to have access to the weapons; to take them with them and not to return them.]* I will give them an order stating that at "one moment," if I'm not there and you don't hear my voice, you will hear somebody else's voice, so you can receive the order from him, and then you can go attack your targets. I want the weapons to be distributed to targets; I want Riyadh and Jeddah, which are the biggest Saudi cities with all the decision makers, and the Saudi rulers live there. This is for the germ and chemical weapons . . . Also, all the Israeli cities, all of them. Of course you should concentrate on Tel Aviv, since it is their center.

HUSAYN KAMIL: Sir, the best way to transport this weapon and achieve the most harmful effects would come by using

The ISG discovered that Saddam was maintaining a biological-warfare research program right up to the Coalition invasion.

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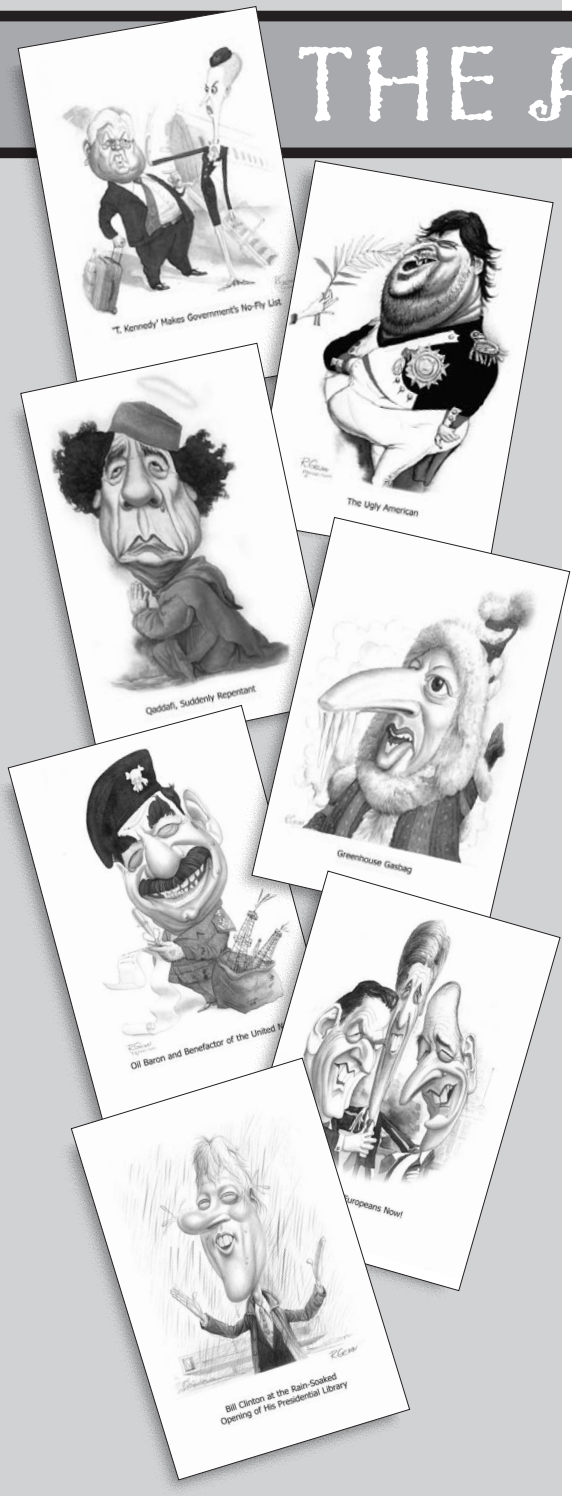
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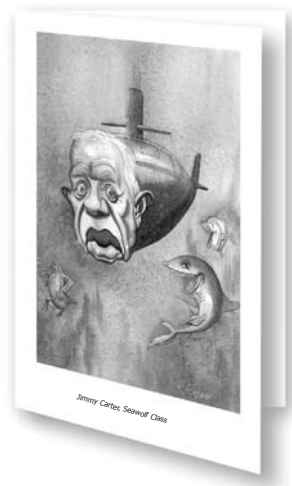

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planes, like a crop plane; to scatter it. This is, Sir, a thousand times more harmful. This is according to the analyses of the technicians (interrupted) . . .

SADDAM: May God help us do it . . . We will never lower our heads as long as we are alive, even if we have to destroy everybody.

And while biological weapons may have been the most dangerous near-term threat that Saddam could pose to the world, other WMD programs were also being fostered. As Oil for Food money began to fill his coffers, Saddam was restarting chemical-warfare, ballistic-missile, and even nuclear programs. After Desert Storm, Saddam encouraged Iraqi officials to, in his words, "preserve the nation's scientific brain trust essential for WMD." He told his close advisers that he wanted to keep Iraq's nuclear scientists fully employed, and this theme of preserving personnel resources persisted throughout the sanctions period. According to his science adviser, Ja'far Diya' Ja'far Hashim, "Saddam's primary concern was retaining cadres of skilled scientists to facilitate reconstitution of WMD programs after sanctions were lifted." Saddam instructed the general directors of Iraqi state companies to prevent key scientists from the pre-1991 WMD program from leaving the country. Saddam, as quoted by his presidential secretary, Abid Hamid Mahmud, also told scientists that they should "preserve plans in their minds" and "keep the brains of Iraq's scientists fresh."

Husayn Kamil—Saddam's son-in-law and minister of military industrialization—announced in a speech in 1995, to a large audience of WMD scientists at the Space Research Center in Baghdad, that WMD programs would be resumed and expanded as soon as U.N. inspectors left Iraq. Clearly, Saddam viewed inspectors and sanctions as little more than a temporary obstacle. In a written statement to the ISG, Saddam's presidential secretary stated that "if sanctions were lifted and there was no U.N. monitoring, then it was possible for Saddam to continue WMD activities and in my estimation it would have been done in total secrecy because he [Saddam] had learned from 1991."

HOW IMMINENT A THREAT?

The question remains as to how long it would have taken Saddam to reconstitute WMD programs once he had escaped the sanctions regime. We have already seen the answer, in the case of bioweapons: a matter of weeks. For the rest of his programs, estimates vary. Tariq Aziz said recently that "Saddam would have restarted his WMD programs, beginning with the nuclear program, after sanctions." Aziz estimated that Iraq would have a full WMD capability two years after sanctions ended. Saddam's minister of military industrialization, Abdullah Mullah al-Huwaysh, told the ISG that Saddam would have reconstituted all of the proscribed programs within five years: This would have included having a sizeable nuclear inventory on hand for immediate use. Huwaysh also stated that in response to a Saddam inquiry regarding how long it would take to start mass production of chemical weapons, he told the dictator that mustard-gas production could start within six months, but Sarin and VX would take a bit longer. Other WMD scientists claimed they had the materials and equipment to start mustard production in days, though such a fast start could damage the production equipment. By 2002, Iraq was already purchasing the precursor chemicals for the production of Sarin.

The ISG report quotes one senior official as stating that by successfully targeting scientists from Russia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, China, and several other countries, and coupling them with resident know-how, Saddam ensured that he could rebuild his entire WMD program within two years.

After 1991, Iraq's own resident WMD scientists were moved from government labs into universities: There they could carry out their work without fear of being targeted by Coalition aircraft or much bothered by U.N. inspectors. According to the ISG report, "Saddam used the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research through its universities to maintain, develop, and acquire expertise, to advance or preserve existent research projects and developments, and to procure goods prohibited by U.N. sanctions." By 1997, the number of university instructors working on WMD-related projects increased from a handful to 3,300, while a further 700–800 were sent to WMD-related companies on a regular basis to help with technical problems.

As Oil for Food money began to fill his coffers, Saddam was restarting chemical-warfare, ballistic-missile, and even nuclear programs.

As the billions in Oil for Food cash flowed in, Saddam "began investing his growing reserves of hard currency in his military-industrial complex, increasing access to dual-use items and materials, and creating numerous research and development programs." Between 1996 and 2002, the annual budget for the military-industrialization ministry—which was responsible for WMD development—increased over forty-fold; by the time the Coalition invaded, it had grown to 1 trillion Iraqi dinars. The military "technical research" projects at Iraqi universities had skyrocketed from about 40 projects in 1997 to 3,200; and the military-industrialization workforce had expanded by over 50 percent in just three years. Saddam's WMD program was ready to move into overdrive.

Financial salvation led Saddam to start thinking again about nuclear weapons. In 1999 he met with his senior nuclear scientists and offered to provide them with whatever they needed, and immediately thereafter new funds began to flow to the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC). In 2001, Saddam mandated a large budget increase for the IAEC and increased the salaries of nuclear scientists tenfold. He also directed the head of the IAEC to keep nuclear scientists together, and instituted new privileges for IAEC scientists, while also investing in numerous new projects.

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From 2001 onward, Saddam convened frequent meetings with the IAEC to highlight new achievements.

While money flowed back into the nuclear project, Saddam also maintained an extensive ballistic-missile program. He had previously told his ministers that he did not consider ballistic missiles to be WMD and that he would never accept missile-range restrictions. In 2002, Iraq began serial production of the Al Samoud II, a ballistic missile that violated U.N. range limits: Test firings reached 183 miles (294 km). By the time the Coalition invaded, 76 of these missiles had been produced and more were in the pipeline. Saddam also, in early 2002, directed the design and production of a missile with a range of 650 to 750 km, and told Huwaysh that he wanted it within six months. Huwaysh relates that when Saddam was informed that production would take longer, and that the twin Volga engines they could sneak through sanctions would reach only 550 km, he left the room "profoundly disappointed." The difference would keep Tel Aviv out of range. (These were not the only means Saddam pursued to strike at Israel: His al-Quds organization was building four UAVs—pilotless drones—that were to be turned over to Hamas for the express purpose of killing Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon.)

What becomes clear, as example piles upon example in the ISG Report, is that this document that has been used by one side of the debate as proof that Saddam had no WMD capability actually says quite the opposite. The fact that no weapons stockpiles were found in Iraq does not mean that Iraq was not a threat. According to the report, Saddam could start producing deadly bioweapons within a week of deciding to do it; he retained the capability to produce smallpox; he had the capability to start producing chemical weapons such as mustard gas within days or at most weeks of deciding to do so; he was actively preparing to produce the nerve agents Sarin and VX; he was pouring cash into nuclear research; he was working on his ballistic-missile program even as the Coalition crossed the border into Iraq.

In short, the unholy trinity of the WMD world—bioweapons, chemical weapons, and nuclear weapons—were either readily available or in the process of being created, along with the missiles required to deliver them anywhere in the region, when Coalition armor rolled into Baghdad. Three years later, we should still be very glad it did. **NR**

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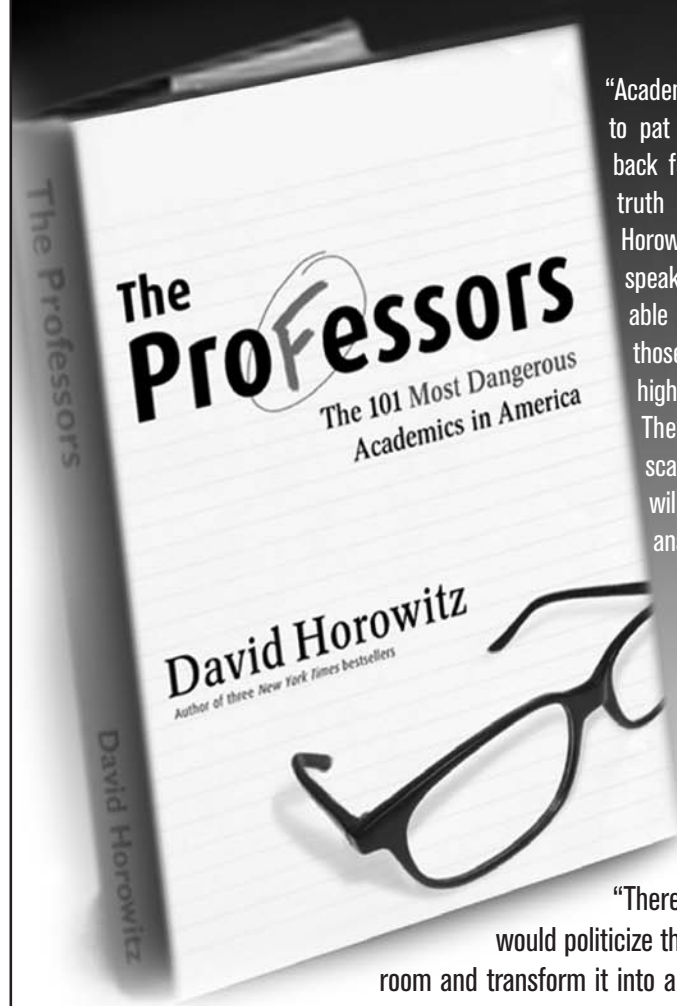

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■ FOREIGN POLICY

'Isolationism!' They Cried

Mainstream journalists misunderstand conservatives (big surprise)

JONAH GOLDBERG

It was a typical *New York Times* article. Among the themes: Iraq is a disaster; it's the neocons' fault; the GOP is flirting once more with its dark addiction to "isolationism"; proof that George W. Bush is growing in office can be found in his realization that Bill Clinton's policies were right; and so on. There was only one problem with the page-one story by David E. Sanger titled "A Bush Alarm: Shun Isolation": It was a pile of nonsense.

According to Sanger, Bush has been blindsided by an "unexpected uprising" among newly isolationist neoconservatives. This "rising chorus of neo-conservatives, who urged Mr. Bush to topple Mr. Hussein, say that, having liberated Iraq, the rest is up to the Iraqis." What neoconservatives did Sanger have in mind? Well, he names only one, presumably the ringleader: William F. Buckley Jr. But the inconvenient fact is that WFB isn't a neoconservative and never urged Bush to topple Saddam Hussein. Moreover, there is no "uprising." Of the major neoconservatives who "urged" the Iraq war—Bill Kristol, Charles Krauthammer, Reuel Mark Gerecht, Robert Kagan, Eliot Cohen, Paul Wolfowitz, Fouad Ajami—none has called for bugging out. They've offered criticisms, to be sure, but not of an isolationist flavor. Nor have the more traditional or mainstream conservative outlets, including this magazine, offered such an opinion. In other words, WFB was ascribed to a rebellious movement he never belonged to—and which isn't rebelling. But other than that Sanger got it just right.

Well, not really. The flaw in Sanger's analysis runs deeper than an error in ideological taxonomy. Here's a rule of thumb to keep in mind when studying the history of American foreign-policy debates in the 20th and 21st centuries. When liberals don't want to do something on the international scene that conservatives favor, it's because liberals are any of the following: prudent, pragmatic, realistic, idealistic, peace-loving, clear-eyed, moral, restrained, or all of the above. When conservatives don't want to commit to a liberal foreign-policy agenda, there's one catchall word: isolationist. And even when conservatives subscribe to the *same* foreign-policy agenda as liberals, they're doing it for isolationist reasons.

For example, in 2004, Franklin Foer, then a senior editor of *The New Republic* (he's now editor), wrote a long essay on conservatives and isolationism for the *New York Times*. It began by noting that conservative columnist George Will had recently voiced some second thoughts about the Iraq War. Will's reservations, according to Foer, were "hardly surprising" given the conservative movement's isolationist history. Of course, *The New Republic* had itself supported the Iraq invasion as much as Will had, if not more so, in 2002 and 2003, and had subsequently come to have grave and strident second thoughts. But no one would suggest—least of all *The New Republic*'s editors—that *they* were retreating into isolationism. George Will's second thoughts are apparently driven by whispers from the America First Committee, while *The New Republic*'s doubts are the stuff of wisdom and clear thinking.

This nasty idea, a defining theme of elite conventional wisdom, works its way into everything from popular culture to highbrow political commentary. And it's a lie. Or, more accurately, it's a half-truth, which is the most pernicious kind of lie. Of course there were, are, and always will be isolationists on the American right. But isolationism isn't a uniquely conservative phenomenon, nor is it written into conservative DNA. If anything, isolationism's natural home is within the mainstream of the Democratic party and *New Republic* liberalism.

1920 AND ALL THAT

It all begins with the Treaty of Versailles and the Republican-led refusal to ratify it. It should be remembered that the Republican party was not then a "conservative" party as we understand that term today. It was Republican Teddy Roosevelt who launched the Progressive party, and the GOP was on the whole more interventionist than the Democrats during that era. Woodrow Wilson promised to keep America at peace and insisted—correctly—that a vote for the GOP was a vote for getting entangled in a foreign war. Wilson eventually dragged America into that war, justifying it on absurdly idealistic grounds (far more idealistic than anything George W. Bush, super-democrat, has said). When Republicans, led by their Senate leader Henry Cabot Lodge, opposed the treaty, critics assailed them as "isolationists." But what usually gets omitted from the story, as David Frum has noted, is that Lodge had agreed to ratify Wilson's *other* treaty. This treaty would have committed the United States to defending France if she were attacked by Germany. In the end, Wilson refused to submit it to the Senate because a) he was a feckless, egocentric crybaby and b) he feared it would lead to America's getting too involved in European affairs.

Confused? It gets worse. Consider the muckraking journalist John T. Flynn, widely seen as the heart and soul of right-wing isolationism in the 1930s. The head of the New York chapter of the America First Committee, Flynn was a tireless and ubiquitous champion of non-intervention abroad and a relentless critic of Wall Street and big business at home. Guess where Flynn made his name? At *The American Mercury*? *The Freeman*? Some other oracle of the imagined paleoconservative past? Nope. *The New Republic*. He wrote a column there for nearly a decade called "Other People's Money." Flynn left *The New Republic* because of his opposition to FDR and his advocacy of non-interventionism. And while it's true that in the 1930s "right-wing" was often defined as "anti-FDR," serious observers would hardly claim that Flynn moved unambiguously to the right.

Indeed, throughout the 1930s, *The New Republic* had subscribed to that "enlightened" form of isolationism we call

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"pacifism," and to people like Flynn it was *The New Republic* that moved right by embracing militarism. Before Flynn broke with *The New Republic*, it had ridiculed those who thought you could "end war by waging war." "On the contrary," it editorialized in 1937, "nothing is more likely than that the United States would go fascist through the very process of organizing to defeat the fascist nations." This was the heart and soul of Flynn's opposition to intervention. Not surprisingly, his allies in the isolationist cause were other liberals who thought they were staying loyal to liberal principles. This group included American Socialist party leader Norman Thomas, longtime *Nation* editor Oswald Garrison Villard, Charles Beard, John Dewey, Joseph Kennedy, Bernard Baruch, and Progressive hero Robert La Follette.

In fairness, isolationism, or non-interventionism, was a defensible position before Pearl Harbor, and before it became clear that isolationism would lead to the triumph of Hitler. The memory of the transcendentally stupid First World War was still fresh in American minds. There was an enlightened bipartisan consensus that such hell should not be revisited, and isolationism was the smart stance among politically ambitious liberals. John F. Kennedy, who was a junior member of the America First Committee when at Choate, sent the AFC $100 while he was at Harvard with a note saying, "What you are all doing is vital." Kennedy's older brother Joe was the head of the isolationist group at Harvard. Sargent Shriver—who would become JFK's brother-in-law, the founder of the Peace Corps, and George McGovern's running mate—was a member of an AFC-affiliated youth group. Gore Vidal headed up the AFC youth chapter at Exeter.

The Left relentlessly throws Charles Lindbergh in conservative faces as proof of the Right's supposed isolationist—and anti-Semitic—heritage. Much of this involves shabby historical analysis: Lindbergh's acclaimed biographer, Scott Berg, couldn't find any evidence that Lindy was a virulent anti-Semite. Claims otherwise rest almost entirely on one lamentable but brief passage in one speech, in which Lindbergh alleged that Jews, capitalists, and British sympathizers were pushing America into war. His final trip to Germany in the 1930s was in behalf of German Jewry: He hoped to persuade Hermann Goering to let the Jews emigrate. As for Lucky Lindy's isolationism, his arguments were based on the prevailing liberal arguments at the time, as well as a fondness for Germany and its culture that was hardly unique, let alone "right-wing." Lindbergh's faith in the reasonableness of Nazis was surely foolish, but, again, such faith was not "right-wing" in any meaningful sense. But even if we were to accept the conventional view of Lindbergh as bogeyman, what of it? Lindbergh's contribution to conservative thought amounts to exactly nil.

One can hardly say the same thing of Messrs. Beard, Dewey, La Follette, and Kennedy, not to mention *The New Republic*. More important, isolationism has always flourished openly on the left, particularly since the dawn of the Cold War. Even many of the leading Republican isolationists—William Borah and Hiram Johnson, for example—were in fact progressive populists who mostly voted with the New Deal. The current refrain about Bush's "lying" us into a "war for oil" has its roots in the writings

Isolationism has always flourished openly on the left, particularly since the dawn of the Cold War.

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of Charles Beard, who was convinced that FDR had orchestrated the war and even Pearl Harbor. In 1965, the dean of Big Brain Liberalism, Walter Lippmann, argued that "our true vital interests" were at home. Anticipating his critics, Lippmann proclaimed, "If it is said that this is isolationism, I would say yes. It is isolationism if the study of our own vital interests and a realization of the limitations of our own power is isolationism. It is isolationism as compared with the globalism which became fashionable after the Second World War."

Bill Clinton's execrable mentor, Sen. William J. Fulbright, was an unapologetic isolationist who found America to blame for every international problem. He sought to de-fund Radio Free Europe on the grounds that it was too unsettling to the Soviets. In 1969, when Richard Nixon said that Fulbright represented the rise of the "new isolationists," the senator didn't deny it, but responded that "the greatest threat to peace and domestic tranquility is not in Hanoi, Moscow, or Peking, but in our colleges and in the ghettos of cities throughout the land."

It was George McGovern who ran on the explicitly isolationist mantra "Come Home, America." And it was Democratic senator Frank Church, inspired by his role model and fellow Idahoan William Borah, who joined with Fulbright to put that slogan into action. The Democrats routinely opposed international assertiveness. They voted to abandon the South Vietnamese (Church cosponsored that legislation), they hobbled the CIA (again, thank you, Senator Church), they opposed Reagan's arms buildup (though not Carter's), and they turned a blind eye to Communist incursions in Nicaragua. It was the Democratic party that stood opposed to the first Gulf War. In the 1990s, Democrats picked up Church's torch, further hamstringing the CIA and the FBI in ways made apparent in the 9/11 Commission hearings. In 2004, it was John Kerry who pounded a lectern because we were opening firehouses in Iraq and closing them in America.

BETTMANN/CORBIS

George 'Come Home, America' McGovern accepting the Democratic presidential nomination in 1972

A DEMOCRATIC REFRAIN

"Come Home, America" has not always described post-Vietnam liberalism, but it has always—*always*—received a respectful hearing on the left. The notion that "we've got bigger priorities at home" is perfectly consistent with the logic of an activist welfare state. And whenever Republicans have been in power and have acted assertively in America's interests, "Come Home, America" has become the Left's dominant rhetorical refrain. But none dare call it isolationism.

Again and again, the story of Republican and conservative foreign policy isn't one of isolationism and retreat, but of self-confidence in America's ability to determine its own course. Meanwhile, many liberals persist in their infuriating tendency to confuse, often deliberately, unilateralism with isolationism. Liberals like to define "internationalism" as subordinating American interests to those of international organizations like the U.N., and "isolationism" as disagreeing with liberals. For example, Sanger approvingly quotes liberal foreign-policy guru David J. Rothkopf as saying that "Bush came [into office] with a philosophy that was almost neo-isolationist. When they dealt with Iraq, they did it alone—outside the context of what globalization implies."

Consider some of Bill Clinton's major international forays. Clinton pushed for the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and intervention in Yugoslavia. Some Republicans opposed the Yugoslavia campaigns and the CTBT on the grounds that they were not in America's interests. The liberal establishment, including Bill Clinton, immediately dubbed this opposition proof positive of resurgent conservative isolationism. The *New York Times* denounced the "smug and shortsighted isolationism of the Republican Congressional leadership." For the record, conservatives opposed the CTBT not out of isolationism, but from a desire to keep all of our options open in world affairs—which makes us "isolationist" just as much as target practice makes a sheriff a hermit. The intervention in Yugoslavia was a complicated issue, dividing many conservatives and liberals—*The Nation* opposed intervention, NATIONAL REVIEW supported it—but only the conservative opponents were called "isolationists." And as for NAFTA, 75 percent of Republicans allied themselves with Clinton while 60 percent of Democrats voted against it. But despite Democratic dependence on protectionist labor unions and other groups opposed to free trade, it is the GOP that supposedly smolders with isolationist aims.

The same nonsense pervades David Sanger's unfortunate article. He cites President Bush's dismay that he had to rely on "arm-twisting" to bring a few wayward Republicans "back into the fold" to win passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This, according to Sanger, "jolted Mr. Bush into recognizing a new retreat from the world by his own party." For the record, only 15 of 202 House Democrats voted in favor of CAFTA—as compared with 205 of 232 Republicans. But, yes, we must keep a weather eye open for isolationism on the rightward horizon. **NR**

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■ THE WORLD

Terror on Trial

Thinking about Shining Path, and those like them

JAY NORDLINGER

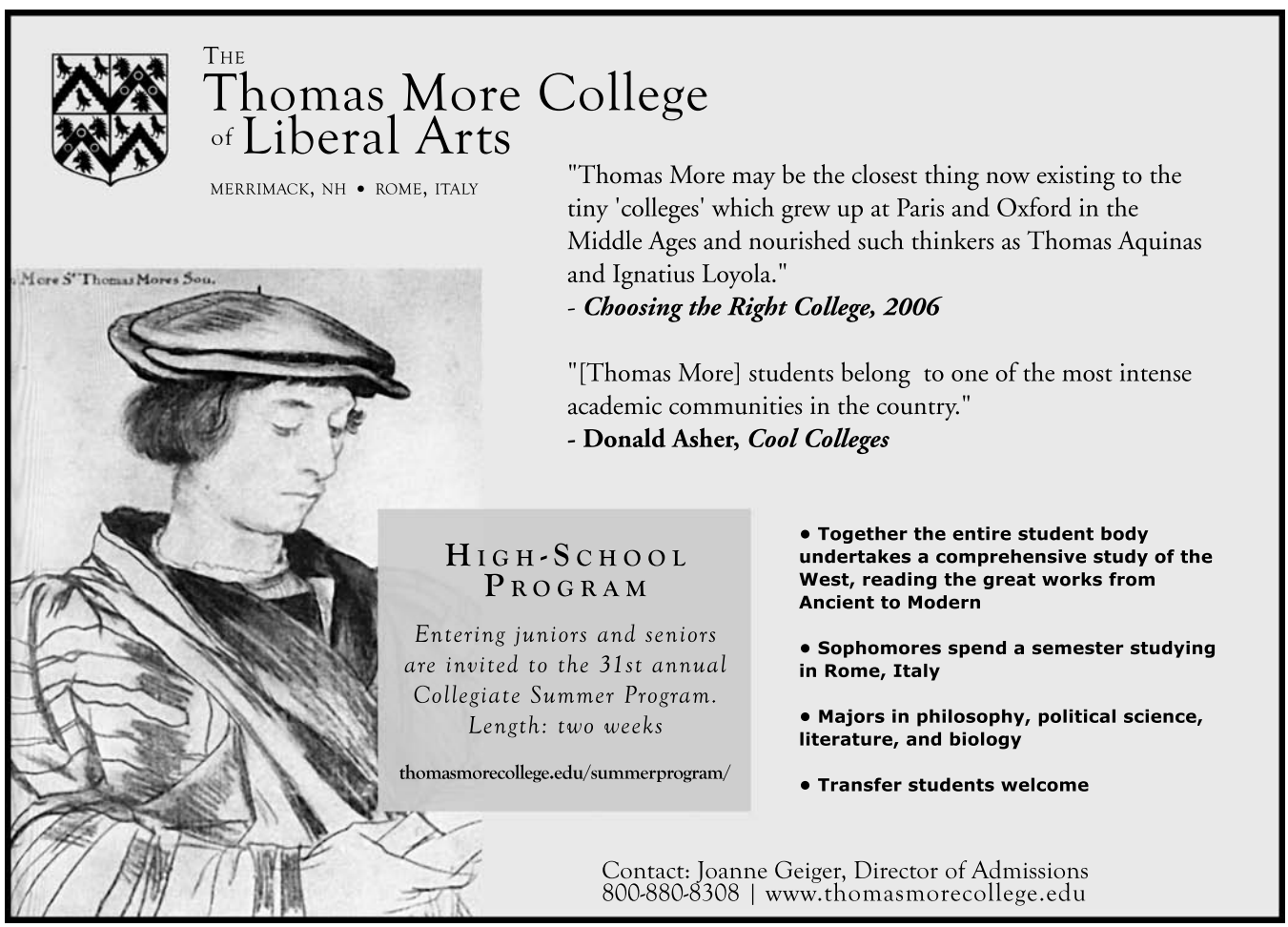
EVERY so often, the world relearns the difficulty of trying a certain kind of monster in court. Nuremberg stands as the eternal example; some people still think they should have been lined up and shot. In The Hague the other day, Milosevic dropped dead, frustrating his prosecutors, and others. Saddam Hussein, of course, continues his judicial theater. Although the judge in the case—currently Raouf Abdel-Rahman—sometimes gets the upper hand. On March 15, Saddam boasted, "I am the head of state." Judge Abdel-Rahman corrected, "You used to be a head of state. You are a defendant now."

A half a world away, Abimael Guzmán is also a defendant. In the roster of 20th-century monsters, he has a place. The difference between Guzmán and Saddam Hussein—and the Nazis and Milosevic and the Rwandan butchers and many others—is that Guzmán never gained power. But in his country, Peru, he managed to kill at least 40,000 people, depending on how you do the accounting. He also wreaked $30 billion in material damage, and left a legacy of fear. Not bad for twelve years' work, accomplished by a former philosophy professor at a provincial university.

You may have forgotten Guzmán and his movement, Shining Path, but I will inflict some reminding. Abimael Guzmán Reynoso was born in 1934, and his university was in Ayacucho, high up in the Andes. He was a leader in the China-favoring faction of the Peruvian Communist party. In 1970, he christened his movement the "Shining Path of José Carlos Mariátegui," after the founder of that party.

Guzmán thought of himself as the heir to Marx, Lenin, and Mao. He had no use for the contemporary Soviets, viewing them as soft. The Cubans and the Nicaraguans—the Castroites and the Sandinistas—were laughable pipsqueaks to him. He reviled Deng Xiaoping, for his departures from Mao. The Communists he really admired were the Khmer Rouge, and he shared their totalizing philosophy. Guzmán was openly genocidalist. At its peak, his movement had 10,000 fighters, and these included adolescents. They killed with particular ease and glee.

Guzmán's plan was to control the countryside and then strangle the cities, conquering all of Peru through "a river of blood." The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plan was launched in earnest on May 17, 1980, when his forces attacked a polling place in tiny Chuschi. This was deeply significant. Peru was just emerging from more than ten years of dictatorship; democracy was in bud. At Chuschi, Shining Path burned the ballot boxes. They could not tolerate any democratic flowering, because that was not the future they had in mind for Peru.

If you discern a similarity to the current insurgency in Iraq, you are not undiscerning. Indeed, to review the campaign of Shining Path in the 1980s and '90s is to be struck by many similarities to today's Iraq.

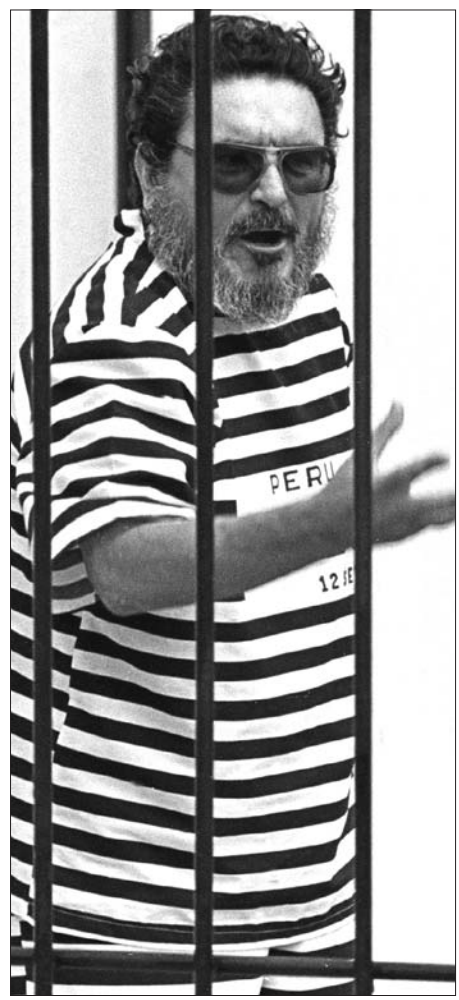
Shining Path took care to kill all the politicians it could—and all the government officials, and all the voters, and anyone at all who dared participate in the democracy. People refused to run for office, for fear that they or their families would be killed. Sometimes, when they ran and won, they immediately resigned. In 1988 alone, Shining Path killed 17 provincial mayors.

And they did a great deal more. They kidnapped, they robbed banks, they bombed embassies. They bombed police academies, they bombed churches, they bombed businesses. They killed anyone, foreign or Peruvian, engaged in relief or development work. Europeans felt they had to withdraw from the country. Just about the only thing missing from Shining Path's repertoire was beheading—but they made up for it by hacking to death with machetes. The stories that come out of the Shining Path period are as gruesome as any you have heard.

Testifying before Congress in March 1992, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, Bernard Aronson, put it well: "In [Shining Path's] mind, any Peruvian or any foreigner who takes up the democratic cause, tries to ease human suffering, or resists terrorist threats is hampering the development of revolutionary consciousness . . ." Abimael Guzmán put it even better. Talking to his Central Committee, he said, "Our policy is to raze to the ground, to leave nothing. . . . In a war, what you cannot use or carry off, you destroy, you burn."

He meant every word. In addition to attacking people, Shining Path attacked infrastructure, which is another way of attacking people. They blew up bridges, irrigation projects, and electrical towers. They caused many blackouts—including one in Lima while the Pope was visiting—and water shortages. Their goal was simply to make life intolerable, to bring Peru to its knees. And they came very close. Peruvians remember this—it was not so long ago—and they shudder.

The similarities to Iraq's insurgents are obvious. And we might consider one more: Shining Path spread lies, preying on the ignorant. For example, they would say, "The American government—in combination with local lackeys—is poisoning your children with herbicides." Iraq's tormenters do no less. But while the similarities are obvious, there are dissimilarities, too. Michael Radu, a Romanian-born scholar in Philadelphia who has studied Shining Path, notes a couple: Shining Path had a clear ideology, and they also had a clear plan. Guzmán was nicknamed "President Gonzalo"; his philosophy was "Gonzalo Thought." And his blueprint for taking the country was known to all. The Iraq terrorists are more ragtag and random, deadly as they are.



JAIME RAZURI/AFP

Abimael Guzmán, on trial the first time

UPSTAIRS, WATCHING TELEVISION

Peru got its big break on September 12, 1992, when Guzmán was at last nabbed, after his dozen years of mayhem and murder. He was upstairs in a Lima safe house—a not-so-safe house—watching television. Then Peruvian forces moved in. It was a historic triumph for President Alberto Fujimori, who five months before had staged his "self-coup," dissolving Congress and other institutions of democracy. His rationale had been counterterror. After Guzmán's capture, Shining Path withered, for it had been highly dependent on its leader.

Guzmán was tried in a military court. He was made to wear prison stripes, and put in a cage; members of the judicial panel were hooded. Lest you judge Peruvian authorities too harshly, for their undemocratic ways, remember this: Prior to this time, it had been impossible to try Shining Path terrorists, because their confreres kept murdering judges, or their families, or their friends, or anyone they could touch. In a two-year period—1991–92—Shining Path killed 120 judges. Hundreds of others resigned, unwilling to sacrifice themselves (to no end). Of course, those participating in Saddam Hussein's trial live under constant threat as well.

There was some question whether Guzmán should have been killed—killed upon capture—and that question lingers today. This is almost always a question, when such a monster is apprehended. Do you do it the Ceausescu way, or the Saddam/Nuremberg way? In any event, Guzmán was given a life sentence. The court could not impose the death penalty on him, for that penalty was reserved for those committing treason in time of war (against another country). Guzmán was lucky for the leniency of even Fujimori's presidential dictatorship.

He would get luckier still, but more about that in a moment.

When Guzmán was first tried in 1992, he had some support on the international left, but not complete support. *The Nation* magazine ran an article on the debate: Should leftists rally to Guzmán or not? Some of the usual suspects said yes: Noam Chomsky, Ramsey Clark, a Berrigan

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brother (Philip). Clark, as you know, is a member of Saddam Hussein's legal-defense team today. Back at the time, he explained to *The Nation* that Guzmán required patience and understanding: "I met with Saddam Hussein, who is supposed to be the closest thing to the devil. If we want to have some peace in Peru, we have to recognize the humanity of all sides." He refused to utter any criticism whatsoever of Guzmán or Shining Path.

Guzmán sat in his cell until 2003, when something astonishing happened: His sentence was overturned; the verdict against him was rendered void; his trial was declared invalid. So it was with all Shining Path prisoners—about 2,000 of them. Put briefly, Peruvian democracy was embarrassed by the Fujimori period. And that period included the military tribunals that had locked away Shining Path. The entire lot of them would have to be retried, in civilian court. This threw the system into chaos, severely overloading it. Hundreds of prisoners—perhaps as many as a thousand—were outright released.

Not Guzmán, of course. He had another day in court, and this one was very different from the first one. No prison stripes, no cage. Instead, Guzmán was looking rather professorial, and he was surrounded by friends: his codefendants, old comrades in arms, including his girlfriend and No. 2, the dread Elena Iparraguirre. They all embraced and chatted. Reporters on the scene said it looked like a family reunion. The group started chanting slogans—"Long live the Communist Party of Peru!" "Glory to Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism!"—and pumped their fists in the air. Circus time. They turned the courtroom into a political forum, attempting to prosecute the judicial system itself. (Saddam Hussein would do exactly the same.) A judge remarked to the press, "Once a trial has this kind of atmosphere, it is very hard to continue moving forward."

The Guzmán trial has moved forward, but in fits and starts. No one is sure when it will end.

PLAYING A NUMBER OF CARDS

The Guzmán trial has moved forward, but in fits and starts. No one is sure when it will end. Álvaro Vargas Llosa is a prominent Peruvian intellectual. He says, "Peruvian justice is notably slow, corrupt, very unpredictable, and always very, very sensitive to

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the political climate." Fortunately, there is no support for Shining Path in Peru today—even the Left, the Communists, have no truck with it. But, as Alberto Bolívar—another Peruvian intellectual—points out, leftists in other parts of the world harbor a fondness for Shining Path, and they are waging the usual propaganda campaign.

Guzmán and other Shining Path prisoners spend a lot of time talking about justice, their rights, due process. This is rich: For years, they dedicated themselves to the destruction of "bourgeois institutions" such as courts. Radicals elsewhere behave this way, too, of course, including in the United States: Kathy Boudin, Susan Rosenberg, Linda Sue Evans, and the rest of the Weather Underground used to scorn everything about "the system," perhaps especially the courts. To avail oneself of them was "counterrevolutionary." But after some years in prison, they started singing about rights and citing the Constitution. (In the waning hours of his presidency, Bill Clinton granted clemency to Rosenberg and Evans. He has never explained that action. Boudin has since been paroled.)

In all likelihood, Guzmán's original sentence will be confirmed: life in prison. But it is also likely that he will appeal to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in Costa Rica. Shining Path is now playing any number of political, legal, and public-relations cards. The old Guzmán, needless to say, would have roared against this.

And the Shining Path movement itself—is it dead? In Lima, there is a Terror Museum, designed to keep a record of those atrocious years, 1980–1992. The museum houses Shining Path soap carvings, music boxes that play Communist hymns. All of this kitsch has Guzmán's picture on it. But Shining Path is not yet merely a memory. They are still in the jungle, killing people. In March 2002, they exploded a car bomb in Lima, near the U.S. embassy. This was three days before President George W. Bush visited. They killed ten people. (Car bombing, you may recall, had been a Shining Path specialty, in the worst days.) Then, when all those verdicts were overturned, the movement got a shot in the arm. They felt rejuvenated. The sight of their President Gonzalo and his lieutenants, whooping it up, cheered them.

As David Scott Palmer, an expert on Shining Path at Boston University, observes, lots and lots of Guzmán's followers have been released from prison—so this has provided a reinforcement of a movement that had been moribund.

Some say that judges are again being intimidated, or bribed. Certain Peruvians are calling for the return of the hoods—to protect judges. And Peruvian democracy in general seems in a fragile state. Alberto Bolívar is one who believes that Shining Path is biding its time, waiting to launch another, all-out campaign. And most agree that Guzmán's continued existence is a comfort and inspiration to the guerrillas now in operation, or waiting. This same kind of talk, of course, is heard in, and about, Iraq.

It might have been neater if Fujimori's men had simply snuffed Guzmán, on that glorious, saving day of September 12, 1992. But civilized people do not operate that way—do not operate as Guzmán does, and as Saddam does. Each of those is having his day in court, or many days. And even as they create their circuses, they are being tried for what they have done. And maybe people, all over, see that the way of the brute does not—with awful inevitability—triumph. **NR**

■ THE 2006 ELECTIONS

Get Ready for Senator Bernie

A letter from Vermont

GEOFFREY NORMAN

Burlington, Vt.

BARACK OBAMA, who has become a U.S. senator, millionaire, best-selling author, and Grammy Award winner in just the last year, came to Vermont the other day for what the *Burlington Free Press* described as a "rock-star-like appearance." While he did not walk on water, Obama did draw a crowd too large for the hall where he was scheduled to speak in support of the Senate bid of Congressman Bernard Sanders.

Sanders is running to succeed the retiring James Jeffords, who, of course, left the Republicans in May 2001, costing the party control of the Senate. Jeffords got his picture on the covers of the big newsmagazines and wrote a book about his conscience, but he did not go over to the other party. While he voted reliably with the Democrats, he fastidiously maintained that he was an Independent. Sanders, too, is an Independent—they are one thing that does grow well in Vermont's poor soil—but he didn't have to quit one of the major parties to get there. Throughout his long political career, Sanders has consistently and stridently argued that the two major parties neglect the interests and needs of "working Americans" and favor plutocrats whose money keeps them in power. Sanders and his supporters refer, disdainfully, to the "Demicans and Republicrats"—shades of George Wallace in 1968, including the wounded pugnacity.

But if Sanders is down on the Democrats, one wonders why the party's biggest star would come here to stump for him. Don't the Democrats have a dog in this fight? Well, actually, no; Vermont's Democratic party is not running a candidate for the Senate and has endorsed Sanders. So, for that matter, has the national Democratic party, whose chairman, Howard Dean, tried mightily, when he was governor of Vermont, to keep Sanders out of Congress, campaigning hard for his opponents.

Evidently, the Democrats have decided that they can't beat Sanders, but—since he has voted with them on the big issues—they can live with him. Obama's visit, then, is just a routine political stop to raise a little money and dispense a little glitter for the party's sanctioned candidate, right?

Could be. But it might also be that Obama and the Democrats need Sanders more than he needs them.

Mr. Norman writes frequently for National Review Online and other publications, including the *Wall Street Journal* and *The Weekly Standard*.

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A HISTORY OF SOCIALISM

Everybody here expects Sanders to win, and win fairly easily. To most voters, it seems as if he has been around forever; and he pretty much has. In 1972, four years after settling in Vermont, Sanders ran as the Liberty Union party candidate in a special election for an open U.S. Senate seat. Fewer than 2,000 Vermonters voted for him—about 2 percent. Six months later, he ran for governor in the regular election and got less than 1 percent of the vote. In 1974, he ran for the Senate again and got about 4 percent of the vote. In 1976, he offered his services for governor and received 6 percent of the vote.

Though he was repeatedly, and decisively, beaten in elections, Sanders neither lost his enthusiasm—which bordered on messianic self-righteousness—nor altered his message, which boiled down to: The "rich" have too much of everything and everyone else is getting a raw deal. Money is power, and power is self-interested; establishment politicians are part of the problem and until they are thrown out of office, nothing will change. Sanders made this case relentlessly.

In 1981, he ran for mayor of Burlington, Vermont's only proper city, which then had a population of some 40,000. The political establishment that had governed the city for years, and did not take Sanders seriously, was shocked when he won the election in a ten-vote squeaker. Out-of-state students at the University of Vermont almost certainly put him over the top—but this was long before the Florida recount, and that was how you played the game.

During the 1980s, Burlington prospered and Sanders became something of a national figure. He got *Doonesbury*'s attention when, as a gesture of opposition to Reagan-administration policies in Central America—especially support of the Nicaraguan Contras—he made Burlington the "sister city" of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. Sanders has a weakness for these ideological stunts. After he was married in 1988, he and his new wife honeymooned in the Soviet Union.

But the voters bought it. Sanders's detractors argued that this was because Burlington enjoyed the Reagan-era economic boom—and was therefore able to afford such initiatives as subsidized daycare, a city arts office, and a city youth council. Yet Sanders's own boundless energy did work to energize the city and imbue it with the sense that it was somehow special. Vermonters of a certain type felt a smugness about themselves and their state in those times—a conviction that, even in their newfound prosperity, they somehow stood apart from the crass money-lust of the rest of the country. They were, you see, a different *kind* of yuppie.

In 1988, Sanders lost, once more, a bid for Vermont's House seat. He ran for the same office again in 1990 and, this time, won. He was repeatedly reelected until, by the turn of the century, he had become the state's most recognizable politician—had achieved, in fact, that special status in politics where one is known only by one's first name. Always and everywhere, Sanders is "Bernie," the same way the junior senator from New York is "Hillary."

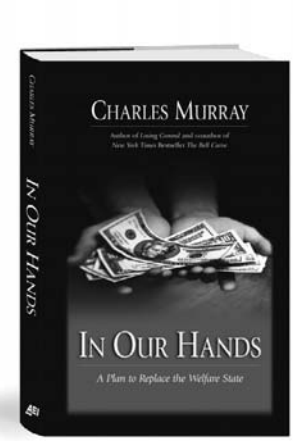
A MAN TO MATCH THEIR MOUNTAINS

If Sanders seems somehow inevitable here in Vermont, that is probably because he and the state have come so far together. Vermont, remember, was one of only two states that FDR did not carry in his 1936 landslide. Its character was as austere and frugal as that of its famous son, Calvin Coolidge. Then, in the 1960s, the new people started coming in. Vermont was a tolerant place: a good place to be poor and get high. The newcomers got older and raised families and became voters. They were followed by another crop of immigrants, less counter-cultural and with more money. The state became known to the rest of the country as a kind of far-left outpost where the kooks went to make macramé and road-test their far-out political schemes. This is the state where you go to the same store to check in the deer you have just shot or buy a $70 bottle of Chardonnay. Vermont is where same-sex civil unions started; where Howard Dean was governor; where a judge recently sentenced a pedophile to the kind of term that would, in other jurisdictions, be considered lenient for jaywalking.

People who don't live here have a hard time taking Vermont seriously. There are only slightly more than 600,000 people in the state, and that number is shrinking. Vermont has always been the kind of harsh place where people eventually get fed up and leave. Early

New from the AEI PRESS

A NEW DEAL FOR A NEW CENTURY



234 pages
ISBN 0-8447-4223-6
$20.00, hardcover

Two decades ago, Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* revolutionized the way we think about welfare. His target now? Entitlements. He wants to eliminate all of them—from Social Security to corporate welfare—and give American adults $10,000 a year instead.

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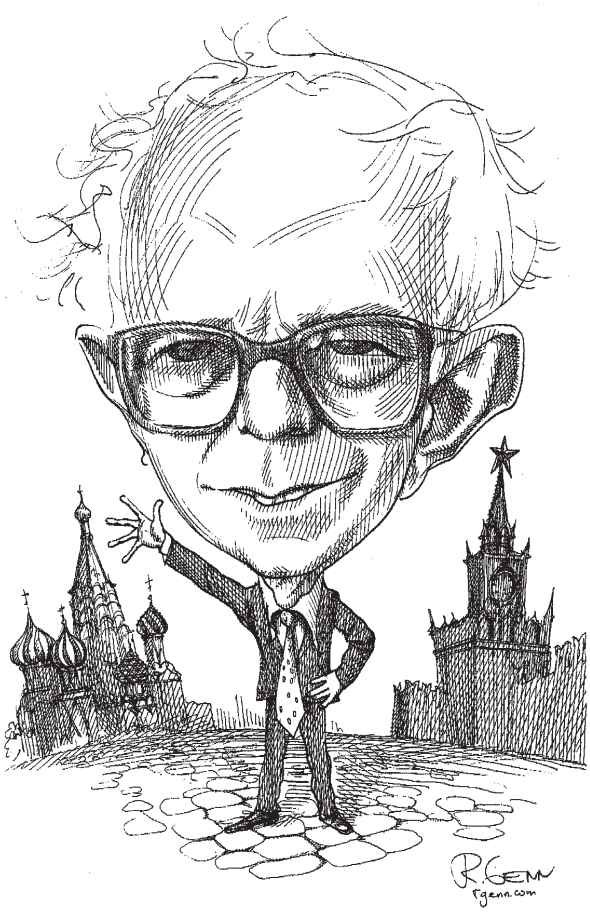
generations found the soil thin and the growing season short. These days, they experience a forbidding business climate of high taxes and excessive regulation. The state is resource-poor and doesn't supply the rest of the nation with anything it particularly needs, unless you count maple syrup. It is the home turf of no important corporations, with the possible exceptions of Vermont Teddy Bear and Ben & Jerry's. There are no major research universities and, hence, no high-tech zones in the state. Vermont's contribution to the nation's welfare comes down to an unusually high number of high-profile national politicians: Dean, Jeffords, Patrick Leahy, and Bernie Sanders.

This is undeniably Sanders's moment. He is an old-fashioned left-winger whose hero is Eugene Debs and who has consistently and indefatigably made the left-wing case, from his first, forlorn campaign more than 30 years ago until today, when he is on the verge of election to the U.S. Senate. The Republicans, meanwhile, are running a candidate straight out of Sanders's playbook, if not his dreams. Rich Tarrant is a self-made multimillionaire who drives a Bentley and has a second home in Florida. He is prepared, he says, to contribute $5 million to his own cause, which will likely be the campaign's most abiding theme. He might make it interesting but it is hard to see how he has a chance.

HISTORIC MOMENT?

Meanwhile, the hard Left is a rising force—in Vermont, certainly, but also in the national Democratic party. Voters who hate the war, who hate Bush, want to hear that old-time religion: none of this "triangulation" or "Third Way" stuff. And while most of the political cognoscenti are talking about a reprise of 1994, but this time in reverse, some of Bernie's people are dreaming even bigger dreams. The memory here is of another, more distant and transforming election: that of 1968. A stalled and unpopular war; an administration and a president badly out of touch and unable to do much about it, or even recognize and admit it; a resistance that is feeling its power and novelty and is on the march in a little state in New England—then it was New Hampshire; now it is Vermont.



ROMAN GENN

The analogy is imperfect, or worse, but that doesn't keep people from believing. In the same week that Barack Obama was praising Vermonters for their "flinty, say-what-you-mean attitude," voters were holding town meetings all over the state. Town Meeting day is still a school holiday in Vermont, but the institution has lost most of its vitality. The big decisions are made elsewhere and local government has been left with the table scraps of democracy. It is hard to imagine Tocqueville getting very worked up about town meeting these days.

In one town—Newfane, in the southeastern corner of the state—the voters debated a resolution that called for Vermont's representative to the U.S. House to introduce impeachment proceedings against President Bush. The Union Hall on the Newfane Green—one of the loveliest greens in the state, with four striking white clapboard buildings crowned by steeples—was packed and there were reporters, of course, there to cover the debate, which went on for well over an hour. I couldn't find a seat, so I stood in the back between two men who were plainly not "flatlanders." Both of them had long, rough beards and wore heavy boots and coarse wool shirts. I guessed they were loggers.

They listened while an amendment to include Dick Cheney's name in the impeachment resolution was debated and defeated, and while one voter from town said, "If I had my way, Bush wouldn't just be impeached, he'd be sent to Gitmo." Toward the end of the debate, one of the men turned to me and said, "National politics at town meeting. Ain't that some sh**."

The motion passed, unsurprisingly. And with that, most of the people in the building got up and left, even though business remained. One of the men standing next to me asked for the floor. He then read a statement about the problems he'd encountered in trying to get a permit to build a small shed on his property. You hear this lament all the time, especially from old Vermonters: "We've got a zoning board here fighting people like me . . . spending tax dollars to fight taxpayers. I think we need to take back Vermont." At the Newfane town meeting, the outsiders—those who hadn't left already—weren't interested. They had a president to impeach, and they got national coverage.

Sanders released a statement in which he said he "[could] very well understand" the town's impeachment vote, but that "with Republicans controlling both the House and the Senate . . . it would be impractical to talk about impeachment." This disappointed some of Sanders's faithful supporters, who believed he could be counted on to make a fight based on the merits, not the prospects of success. Futility, after all, had never held him back before. But now, with his eyes on the Senate prize, Sanders has begun to maneuver in ways that look suspiciously . . . *political*. He declined to support any candidate in the Burlington mayoral race and wound up looking timid when the Progressive-party candidate won. He has also pressured the Progressives against

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running a candidate for his House seat, since that might help tip the election to the Republicans. (This from a man who, for three decades, routinely shrugged off the charge that he was running "spoiler" campaigns.) Even worse, Sanders has endorsed Peter Welch, the Democratic candidate, who is known to have owned stock in Wal-Mart. The *horror*.

Still, the Sanders campaign is the purest expression anywhere of the old Progressive ideal. It may strike what appears a merely nostalgic chord—you sometimes expect Sanders to start braying about mankind being crucified on a cross of gold—but it still resonates with millions of voters. Sanders, like any good politician, will run on fears and resentments, and his issues will be trade, loss of jobs, immigration, health care, income disparities, and corruption. Globalization may be inevitable, and it may be a good thing, but it will not be painless; Bernie screams for the people who hurt.

When he makes it to the Senate, Bernard Sanders may represent the most insignificant state in the Union, but he will have a national voice.

The man who had written the Newfane impeachment resolution made his disappointment with Sanders clear enough, telling a reporter, "My biggest fear is that he's taking John Kerry's tried and true [strategy] and moving to the middle—and losing." A letter writer to one Vermont newspaper suggested that the state's congressional delegation, including Sanders, had "lost its edge." This, evidently, was too much for Sanders, who—two days after his statement on the Newfane vote—signed on to a bill, introduced in Congress by Michigan Democrat John Conyers, that could lead to impeachment. Sanders made the move without the usual fanfare, and after he had originally called the Conyers effort "impractical."

When he makes it to the Senate, he may represent the most insignificant state in the Union, but he will still be one of only 100, and he will have a national voice. His constituency extends way beyond the Green Mountains.

Which is why Barack Obama felt obliged to drop in and make nice for an afternoon and why, in his own remarks, Sanders promised, "This small state is going to lead this nation in a new direction." **NR**

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HELP!!!!

Chris Brownes Bestiary

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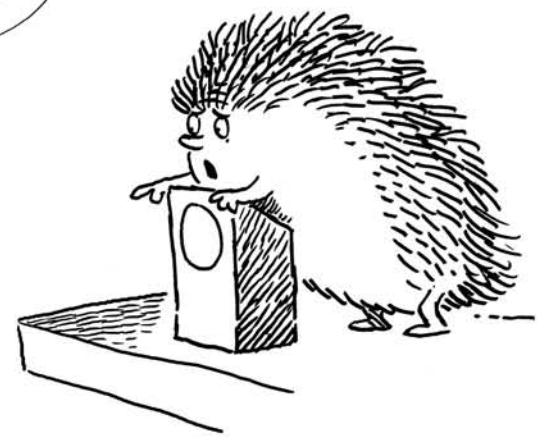
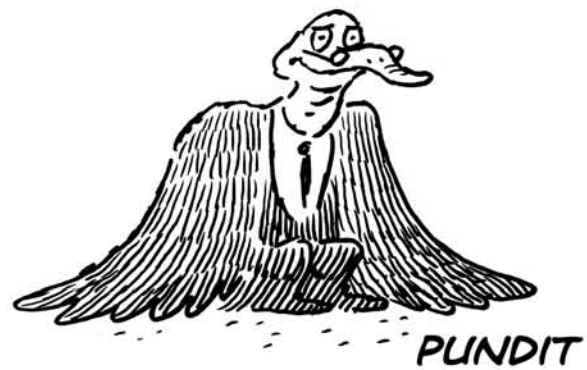
HEDGINGHOG...

DEFENSIVE ADMINISTRATION
ANSWER-BEARING
MAMMAL



BADGER...

VAIN,
AGENDA DRIVEN,
EGG-SUCKING
PREDATOR



PUNDIT

ANY OF A GROUP OF LARGE, FLIGHT-LESS BIRDS WHOSE RANGE INCLUDES SUNDAY MORNING SHOWS AND FOXNEWS. GOOD TALKERS: KNOWN TO PREEN.

APOLOGIST...

HERDING ANIMALS,
SMALL GROUPS CAN BE SPOTTED ON
OPEN GROUND, MIGRATING TO
THE LEFT OR MOVING IN CIRCLES,
EXPLAINING TO EACH OTHER THAT
"IT'S ALL OUR FAULT, AMERICA'S
FAULT, THE FAULT OF
IMPERIALISM,
CAPITALISM, ETC..."

A FORM OF **YAK.**

ANCHOR...

HUMORLESS, MONOTONAL, SOLITARY, OVERPAID, LEFT-LEANING BEARS, ORIGINALLY FROM CANADA, NOW ALMOST EXTINCT. ONLY THREE KNOWN TO EXIST- ALL MALES.

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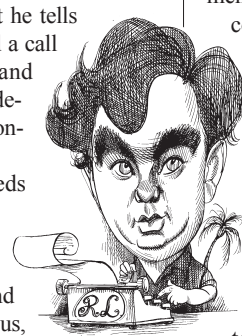
the long view

ROB LONG

Wachtell & Zabel
300 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y.

IN RE: Resolution of side-agreement dispute between Clinton and Clinton

Dear Mike:
Many thanks for your prompt response to my letter of 9 March 2006. In that conversation, as I'm sure you'll recall, you suggested that perhaps this dispute over the current Dubai Ports World matter might be more effectively resolved if we, along with our clients, met in conference at some mutually agreeable location. I passed this on to my client upon his return from Davos and the *Vanity Fair* Oscar party, at which point he tells me that he promptly placed a call to your client, his wife, and was rebuffed by what he describes as "hurtful" and "non-constructive" language.



Clearly, this matter needs attention. If you'll permit me to be frank, both of our clients are talented and articulate lawyers, and therefore it is incumbent on us, their counsel, to seek ways to maintain an atmosphere of good cooperation and communication between them. Six years ago, they elected to communicate with each other exclusively through counsel, and I think both of us would be hard-pressed to declare this agreement anything but a success. Your client has gone on to the United States Senate, and is currently a top contender for the Democratic nomination to the presidency. My client is a sought-after speaker and world leader and, additionally, has to beat them off with a stick. (As is his right under the terms of the agreement.)

It does neither of them any good to be seen as a quarreling, unhappy couple locked in a sham marriage of political necessity, when the truth is that they're a happily married team of compatible professionals who prefer to maintain totally separate domiciles and to communicate solely via the medium of their individual legal representation (and they have fully executed contracts to that effect).

Let's talk soon, Mike, and put this matter to bed quickly, before my client leaves for the Cannes Film Festival.

Sincerely,
Steve

Patton & Pickering
1990 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

IN RE: Clinton/Clinton Side Agreement Section XLV, ii

Dear Steve:
Many thanks for your last letter, and for your continued efforts to resolve this troubling issue. I'm puzzled, however, by your insistence in our last telephone conversation that we're just "miscommunicating."

The truth is, as I'm sure you'll agree when you reacquaint yourself with the relevant section of the Clinton/Clinton Side Agreement that I cite above (page 268 of the final compilation of terms and agreements we worked out in January 2000), your client is to "make known in writing" any and all "alliances, contacts, arrangements, and employments" within a reasonable time frame, to which my client has veto rights not to be unreasonably exercised. Your client neglected to mention his work with the United Arab Emirates or Dubai Ports World, and his flippant response to our complaint ("Where d'ya think I got this Rolex, babe?") is non-responsive at best. My client has suffered no small amount of political damage by the revelation that her husband was actively aiding a country and a company at the same time that she, in her capacity as a United States senator, was calling them into question.

I agree that it's time to put this matter behind us. But to do so will require some restitution on the part of your client to heal this rift and put this marriage back on track, with things running smoothly via counsel. Please respond at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Mike

Wachtell & Zabel
300 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y.

IN RE: Final and best offer

Dear Mike:
I'm frustrated by our recent telephone conversation, in which you responded to our restitution offer of the appearance of my client at six (6) fundraising dinners, as well as access to his exclusive mailing lists of donors and supporters for a period of three (3) months, with a totally imbalanced and out-of-left-field counteroffer: that he restrict foreign travel and issue a cash transfer to your client's Riggs account. This is unacceptable.

As you know, it is precisely my client's foreign travel, as well as his work with far-flung countries and concerns, that allows him to earn funds commensurate with a person of his stature—and affords him the opportunity for certain recreational activities to which he is entitled under the terms of our agreement.

To that end I reiterate our offer, and, as a gesture of good faith, I will suggest that, at a mutually convenient time in the near future, my client would be willing to appear publicly at a dinner or event with your client and to touch and/or regard her with the gestures and expressions appropriate for a happily married couple.

Can we agree to this?

Steve

Patton & Pickering
1990 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Steve:
I've just now spoken to my client. She's inclined to accept the spirit of the offer and to put this matter behind us.

She requested, though, that in lieu of some kind of dinner and/or luncheon, perhaps the more effective means of restitution would be for your client to agree to accompany my client—obviously at a time mutually agreed upon—on a brief cruise and/or Caribbean weekend getaway, with a brief, limited, and tightly organized photo opportunity.

Will this work?

Mike

Wachtell & Zabel
300 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mike:
I've just received e-mail confirmation from my client. He's in enthusiastic agreement. I think we've put this matter to rest. When can my client call your client directly to discuss cruise and/or resort options? And would it be okay if he brought along a friend?

Steve

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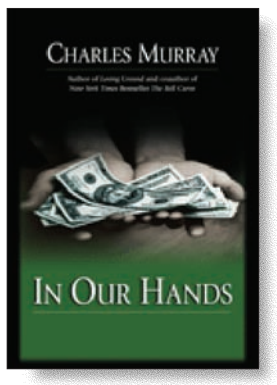
A Better Deal



In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State, by Charles Murray (AEI, 222 pp., $20)

RAMESH PONNURU

In the late 1980s, Charles Murray engaged in a thought experiment. He had already, in *Losing Ground*, proposed doing away with welfare on the theory that it would improve the lot of poor people. Now he wondered whether people would be better off if the entire welfare state were done away with. Why not get rid of all the transfer programs and just give everyone a check?

But the numbers didn't add up—the check would be too small for the trade to work. Murray abandoned the thought experiment and turned to other projects: most famously, *The Bell Curve*, a book on intelligence and public policy that he wrote with the late Richard Herrnstein.

Meanwhile, the government kept growing. Murray has come back to his thought experiment two decades later. He finds that as a result of this growth, the math now works.

Murray's plan has the elegance of simplicity. First, get rid of transfer programs: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, farm subsidies, student loans, welfare, unemployment benefits, all of them. Enact a constitutional amendment barring such programs.

Second, deposit a check each month into the bank account of every American 21 or older. People making less than $25,000 a year would get $10,000 a year. The size of the checks would gradually fall for people making between $25,000 and $50,000. Everyone who made more than $50,000 would get the minimum payout: $5,000 a year.

Third, enact a few sweeping health-care reforms. Stop using the tax code to encourage employer-provided health insurance over other health-care arrangements. Change regulations and tort laws so that low-cost clinics can handle many routine medical procedures. Force insurers to offer the same coverage at the same rates to everyone over 21, and force everyone to purchase at least catastrophic coverage.

Some free-marketeers will reject that last part of Murray's plan as too dirigiste, although the net effect would be a much freer health-care market. (He would get rid of Medicare and Medicaid, don't forget.) But they will also have two questions about the trade-off of programs for checks. Will it make the government bigger or smaller in dollar terms? And how will it affect people's incentives to work?

Murray's plan has the elegance of simplicity: Get rid of transfer programs and deposit a monthly check in Americans' bank accounts.

The answer to the first question is: bigger in the very short run, smaller in the long run. Murray calculates that implementing his plan in 2002 would have required an additional $355 billion in spending. But government is growing, thanks largely to the aging of the population, and by 2012 the Murray plan would be cheaper than maintaining transfer programs. In 2020, it would be $549 billion cheaper (adjusting for inflation). In reaching these estimates, Murray uses assumptions that are unfavorable to his plan so as to create a margin of safety.

Murray thinks that the effects on work will be positive or, where negative, tolerable. People who don't go to college will already be working by the time they are 21. The typical 21-year-old high-school graduate makes about $20,000: $30,000 with the grant. He won't quit his job and move from $30,000 to $10,000. People who do go to college, meanwhile, almost always have career ambitions that will make them work.

Murray speculates that the grant may even bring some young underclass men into the labor force. He takes the case of a guy who is sponging off his parents. If he gets a job, he will be expected to contribute rent—which substantially diminishes his incentive to get a job. Give him a grant, and he will be expected to use it to pay rent. He will now keep more of any additional income he makes and thus have a stronger incentive to work.

A few groups might work less. Working mothers with working husbands might find it easier to become housewives with the grant. (The mother gets the full $10,000 if she is not working, even if her husband is.) The surtax might lead people making around $40,000 a year to put in fewer hours (but not to quit: Going from $46,800 to $10,000 wouldn't be fun). The grant might make it possible for some low-income kids to take time off during or just after college. In return for this slight, and partly beneficial, reduction in labor supply, Murray thinks that the country would reap many benefits. The floor for retirement income would be higher than it is now, and many people would find that their investments had yielded more money than Social Security would have. Health-care costs would drop, or at least increase at a lower rate.

The working poor would no longer be with us. You could work at the minimum wage for less than half a year and, with the grant, be above the poverty line. Single motherhood—always, and properly, a key concern for Murray—would decline. Teen mothers would get nothing directly from the government, although their parents would have more money to help them. It would be easier to tap their

Mr. Ponnuru is an NR senior editor and the author of *Party of Death*, forthcoming from Regnery Publishing in late April.

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boyfriends' bank accounts, or future bank accounts, for child support. Older single women will get the grant, but they will get nothing from the federal government as a result of having a baby. Low-income married couples, on the other hand, might find having children financially easier.

The plan should make it easier for low-income couples who have been deterred from marrying by economic circumstances to do so. Its other effects on marriage depend on how many rights and responsibilities of fatherhood attach to marriage.

Mobility would increase. Thanks to Murray's reforms, health plans would no longer lock people into jobs. The process of applying for various government benefits would no longer keep people in declining cities, either. Finally, Murray expects charitable organizations and mutual-aid societies to grow as the welfare state shrinks. (Murray has long been one of our most communitarian, as well as one of our most libertarian, public-policy thinkers.)

As nice as all this sounds, to my mind Murray undersells the advantages of his plan. He does not, for example, mention how many fewer government workers his plan would entail. This downsizing would mean that the government would cease to be the chief lobby for more government. He thinks that the removal of incentives for bearing illegitimate children will increase the abortion rate. I'm not sure that would happen, both because illegitimacy and abortion rates have moved in tandem over the last several decades and because Murray's reforms might have a conservatizing effect on voters. If the proportion of the electorate that is married increases—let alone the proportion of one-income marriages—one would expect the country to become more welcoming of new life.

Could it be done? For most of the book, Murray asks the reader to suspend disbelief about the political viability of his plan. In his conclusion, he suggests that something like his plan is too reasonable not to be implemented. He does not consider whether, if implemented, the plan would be sustainable. I'm less optimistic than he is on both counts, but the shadow of pessimism can be detected in his proposal for a constitutional amendment. If the plan would be such a great improvement over government programs, why would we

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need an amendment to keep them from coming back?

One reason might be interest-group politics. Replace all the transfer programs with cash grants, and it would still be rational for people who provide a service to band together and get the government to subsidize that service. The success of any one such group would impose too few costs on any individual citizen for it to be rational for him to try to stop it.

When the government makes enough such deals, it becomes a giant shell game. It takes money from John, in his role as taxpayer, to give to Joe, in his role as a farmer. Then it turns around and takes money from Joe and gives it to John in his role as a student. The power of Murray's idea is that instead of trying to stop each individual transfer, it makes a big offer that is worth more to Joe and John than keeping their specific benefits.

The offer may not last. But every other strategy to shrink the state seems to have reached a dead end. Murray, in limpid prose, reminds conservatives that getting rid of the welfare state really would be in the interests of the vast majority of people. His offer to us is hope, at a time when we could use some. **NR**

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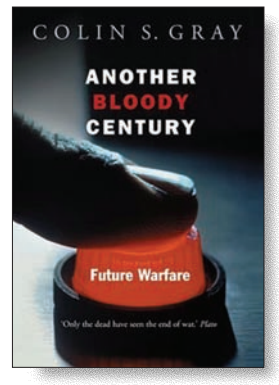

Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare,
by Colin S. Gray
(Cassell, 440 pp., $35.02)

MACKUBIN THOMAS OWENS

The Defense Department has just issued its third Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a congressionally mandated document laying out the assumptions that presumably will guide the planners as they develop strategy and allocate scarce defense resources. The QDR and the critiques of it reveal the difficulty Pentagon officials have: They must make hard decisions today based on assumptions about a highly uncertain future.

The record is not a good one: American defense planners have been flummoxed by a strategic surprise on the average of once a decade. The late British field marshal Sir Nigel Bagnall observed that "over the centuries, identifying a nation's future strategic priorities has proved to be a very imprecise art, and as a result peacetime force structures have seldom proved relevant when put to the test of war."

The 2006 QDR reflects the post-9/11 conventional wisdom that interstate conflict, the mode of warfare that dominated the world from the rise of the modern state until the Cold War, is a thing of the past. This is particularly true of total war, a form of interstate conflict that originated with the French Revolution and culminated in the world wars of the 20th century. Future conflict, we are told, will take the form of "inter-civilizational, intercultural warfare," of which radical Islamic terrorism with the global reach of al-Qaeda is Exhibit A.

Mr. Owens is an associate dean of academics and a professor of national-security affairs at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. He is writing a history of U.S. civil-military relations.

Not so fast, writes Colin Gray in his new book, *Another Bloody Century*: Regular interstate war may be out of favor now, but it has a future, no matter what today's defense pundits maintain.

No one is more qualified to address the issue of future war than Gray, who has been the most consistently brilliant and prolific strategic thinker in the English-speaking world for the past three decades. The author of some 18 books and innumerable journal articles, Gray has written on everything from nuclear doctrine to naval policy; but he is at his best when—as here—he addresses the broad canvas of strategy.

Taking his bearings from Clausewitz, Gray gleefully debunks the things we "know" about war that just aren't so. Seven theses make up the essence of his argument in *Another Bloody Century*.

First, war is a permanent feature of the human condition. The belief that it will disappear because of human progress, globalization, or "the end of history" is no more realistic today than it was in 1914, when the world was nearly as "interdependent" as it is today.

Second, although war may manifest a variable *character*, it possesses an unchanging *nature*. Clausewitz is still read because he developed a universal "theory of war," applicable to war in all eras including the current one. Gray argues that war will remain what it has always been, a struggle between two active wills that seek to subjugate each other.

Third, although "irregular" warfare is likely to be the dominant mode of belligerency for some time to come, interstate war—including great-power conflict—has a healthy future. Although the zeitgeist "screams 'irregular' and 'asymmetrical' while leading politicians

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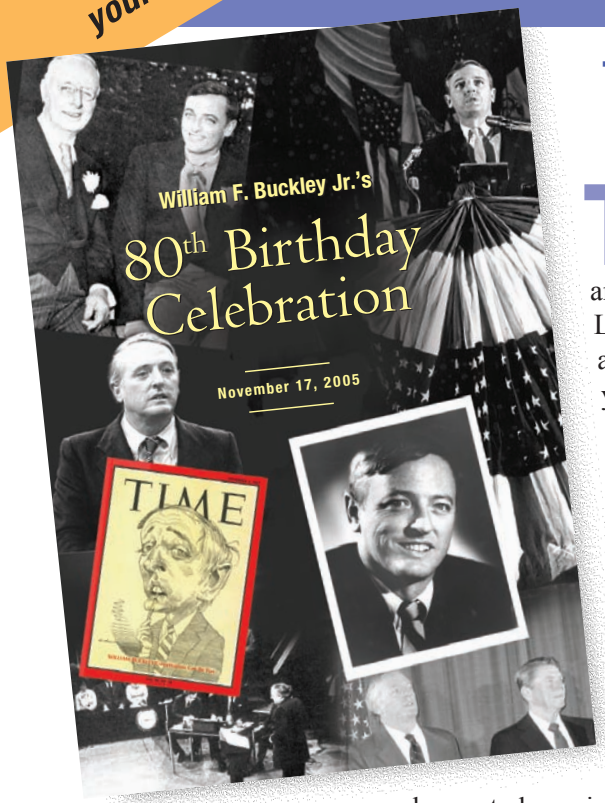

Two great events: National Review's 50th Anniversary and Bill Buckley's 80th Birthday

They were two nights to remember. On October 6th, the National Review Institute was proud to sponsor the 50th Anniversary soirée of America's premier journal of opinion. And oh, what a night it was—1,000 exuberant people in attendance, wall-to-wall conservative illuminati (led by Rush Limbaugh, George Will, Henry Hyde, and M. Stanton Evans) standing athwart the atrium of Washington's historic National Building Museum yelling "Don't stop!", unrivaled music and revelry, a fascinating "History of *NR*" video, powerful remembrance speeches by Bill Buckley and Rich Lowry, and so much more.

A few weeks later, this time in New York City, the National Review Institute was proud to sponsor another major celebratory event—the 80th birthday party honoring the founder of the conservative movement, William F. Buckley Jr. And oh, what a swell party it was: brilliantly emceed by Christopher Buckley, a hugely entertaining video history of the night's honoree, touching tributes by John O'Sullivan and the beloved Priscilla Buckley, delightful musical performances from the renowned Yale Whiffenpoofs and Harvard Krokodiloes, and again—so very much more.

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identify terrorism, the ultimate in irregular warfare, as the defining threat for security of our time," the United States—in its role as the world's "sheriff," providing the public good of security during the early 21st century—cannot afford to settle upon a preferred mode of combat in the hope and expectation that it will be able to oblige any and all enemies to conform to an American style in warfare. Defense planners must avoid the "likelihood fallacy": shifting our strategic focus and investment priorities to those scenarios that are currently "more likely" while forgetting that other scenarios, such as large-scale regular warfare, are less likely precisely because our focus and investment have deterred them.

Fourth, the political context is the principal driver of war's incidence and character. Wars are not fought for their own sake but for political goals. War may be the least bad option available to a government, but it is an option nonetheless. Political calculations about the "value of the object," risk, and costs will always drive the decision to resort to war in the first place, and determine how long and vigorously it will be waged and when it will be terminated.

Fifth, since war is social and cultural as well as political and strategic, it must reflect the characteristics of the communities that wage it. Each community prepares for and wages war after its own fashion. As Sun Tzu observed, victory is more likely when we understand not only ourselves but also our enemy.

Sixth, there have been "military revolutions"—discontinuities in the practice of war—in the past. Warfare does not always change in an evolutionary fashion. Strategic history is non-linear. Trends come in bundles and interact in unpredictable ways, leading to great convulsions and discontinuities. Accordingly, surprise is not only possible or probable, but certain.

Seventh, attempts to limit and regulate war are worth pursuing, but the benefits from such efforts are fragile and are easily overturned by a belligerent who perceives it to be in his interest to do so.

Gray's book is about war in general, not U.S. defense policy. But because the U.S. performs the role of sheriff and because its military power is so great, Gray spends a great deal of time talking about it; and he is not altogether complimentary in his observations.

Gray has long argued that U.S. policymakers are prone to behave a-strategically, that a sophisticated and holistic approach to war is not one of the strengths of the U.S. defense community. For example, Americans tend to confuse *military* effectiveness (winning battles) with *strategic* effectiveness—achieving strategic goals and then translating them into political advantage. We saw this in Vietnam, and we are seeing it now in Iraq.

Another example of this a-strategic mindset is the tendency on the part of many Americans, both in uniform and out, to see technology as a panacea. Gray contends that all too often, Americans treat the past, present, and future of warfare as if they were "synonymous with the history of technology, particularly weapons technology."

Although things are not nearly as bad as they were several years ago when I coined the term "technophiles," there are still those who seem to believe that technological prowess can insulate the U.S. from defeat on the battlefield. For instance, many prominent defense experts have argued that emerging technologies and "information dominance" will eliminate "friction" and the "fog of war," providing the commander and his subordinates nearly perfect "situational awareness," thereby promising "the capacity to use military force without the same risks as before." Gray responds that training, leadership, morale, and competent force employment are ultimately more important than technology.

Gray has long argued that a sophisticated and holistic approach to war is not one of the strengths of the U.S. defense community.

Gray is merciless in his assault on the "big ideas" that often captivate defense planners and lead them to claim that the nature of war has changed. The catalogue of recent defense buzzwords includes "net-centric warfare," "asymmetric strategy," "fourth-generation warfare" (4GW), "effects-based operations" (EBO), and the like. Gray describes all of this as "essential banality overdressed as supposedly brilliant insight" and "pimples of varying merit upon the body of war's essential and enduring nature":

> There has never been a shortage of theorists convinced that they alone had the answer either to the military conundrum of the day, or, for those with truly inflated egos, that they had discovered the key to military success in all periods. . . . The market for panaceas, pretentious expert-sounding jargon, decoration and redecoration of the devastatingly obvious, and rediscovery of ancient wisdom, will never decline. The problem is not that these concepts are completely devoid of meaning, but that they often reinvent the wheel, give it a fancy new name, and sell it as *the* answer to our strategic dilemma.

As an example, Gray quotes the definition of 4GW by a well-known advocate of the idea, and observes that, while there is much truth in the concept, there is actually nothing unique about 4GW: What the advocate said applies as well to war in general. Similarly, Gray argues with regard to EBO that while all military action seeks to achieve effects beyond the battlefield, the concept as it is used in the Pentagon encourages the fallacious belief that the conduct of war can be precisely orchestrated, and that an enemy's military response to the steps we take is reliably predictable. And an "asymmetric strategy" would seem to be an example of "the department of redundancy department": All strategies worthy of the name are asymmetric in that they try to target an enemy's weakness and avoid his strengths.

Another Bloody Century makes the case that history is our best guide to the future. History does not tell us what to think but it does teach us what to think *about*—how to distinguish between first- and second-order issues. That is why those who wish to understand what war will be like in the future will still find it useful to consult Thucydides, Sun Tzu, Clausewitz—and Colin Gray. **NR**

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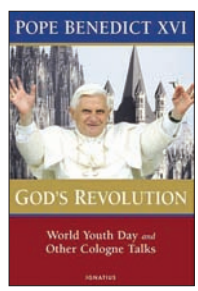
■ SHELF LIFE ■

Seeking God's Face

MICHAEL POTEMRA

CHERISHED ideas die hard. True, the favored image of the erstwhile Cardinal Ratzinger as a brutal Grand Inquisitor has not survived the first year of the pontificate of Benedict XVI—but a residual miasma of mainstream suspicion prevents the appropriate amount of attention from being paid to some of the new Pope's remarkable pronouncements. Fortunately, the indispensable Catholic publisher Ignatius has now made available in book form a series of the important speeches delivered by Pope Benedict in Germany last summer. In ***God's Revolution: World Youth Day and Other Cologne Talks*** (108 pp., $14.95), we have some of this Pope's central messages.



Benedict's ministry is radically Christocentric. Welcoming pilgrims to the World Youth Day celebrations, he insisted that only Christ "gives the fullness of life to humanity. . . . Christ takes from you nothing that is beautiful and great, but brings everything to perfection for the glory of God, the happiness of men and women, and the salvation of the world." Yet he proclaims Christ in a spirit not of triumphalism, but of the love that is at the heart of the Christian faith. This focus on love would become even sharper in the encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, published a few months afterward, but it was certainly in evidence in the Germany visit. Benedict told an audience of seminarians that their vocation might be compared to "falling in love"—and "love knows no 'why'; it is a free gift to which one responds with the gift of self."

This has important consequences for the way Christianity is practiced and proclaimed. In a sermon on the journey of the Magi, Benedict pointed out that these searchers for a King "had to change their ideas about power, about God and about man . . . Now they were able to see that God's power is not like that of the powerful of this world. God's ways are not as we imagine them or as we might wish them to be. God does not enter into competition with earthly powers in this world. He does not marshal his divisions alongside other divisions. . . . He contrasts the noisy and ostentatious power of this world with the defenseless power of love . . . [that] ushers in the Kingdom of God."

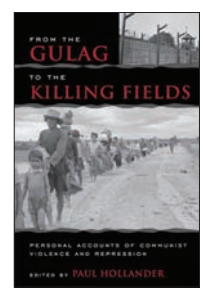
These comments capture well the spirit of the Pope's addresses to Jewish, Muslim, and non-Catholic Christian audiences in Cologne. To the Muslims, he made a timely confession, and appeal: "How many pages of history record battles and wars that have been waged, with both sides invoking the Name of God, as if fighting and killing the enemy could be pleasing to Him. The recollection of these sad events should fill us with shame, for we know only too well what atrocities have been committed in the name of religion." This admission of the sins of Christendom past, which Benedict issued many months before the recent "cartoon intifada," gave him an Archimedean point from which to encourage the Muslim world to respect religious liberty: an ideal certainly implicit within both Christianity and Islam, but which Christendom had, in practice, to be taught by the secularists of the Enlightenment, and Islamdom has (by and large) yet to learn.

Perhaps most noteworthy were the Pope's comments at an ecumenical meeting. In Germany—the birthplace of the Reformation—he offered a dramatic context for the understanding of Christian divisions. Too often, ecumenical discussions get bogged down in issues of ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is, formally, the study of the Church; but it often degenerates into the study of bureaucracy, of who's-in-charge—in short, of Lenin's "who whom." In a remarkable address, partially ad-libbed, Pope Benedict declared his impatience with this approach: "It is said that . . . the elaboration of ecclesiological issues and the questions concerning ministry are the main obstacles still to be overcome. Ultimately, this is true, but I must also say that I dislike this terminology, which from a certain point of view delimits the problem since it seems that we must now debate about institutions instead of the Word of God, as though we had to place our institutions in the center and fight for them. I think that in this way the ecclesiological issue . . . [is] not dealt with correctly.

"The real question," Benedict continued, "is the presence of the Word in the world." The proclamation of this Word demands a commitment to Christian unity, but the Pope stresses that "this unity does not mean what could be called an ecumenism of return: that is, to deny and to reject one's own faith history. Absolutely not!"

This is the approach of an apostle who meets the world in the spirit of Christ—that is to say, with a challenge grounded in love and true human respect. *God's Revolution* is a small book, but the ideas it presents are large.

■ The trial of Saddam Hussein may have farcical aspects, but what it is accomplishing is deadly serious: It is compiling—for history—a record of eyewitness testimony of the crimes against humanity perpetrated by Saddam's sadistic regime. And eyewitnesses are essential to mankind's process of memory; they humanize what can too easily be deadened into statistical dust.



The power of witness could not be any clearer than in the massive new anthology ***From the Gulag to the Killing Fields: Personal Accounts of Political Violence and Repression in Communist States*** (ISI, 750 pp., $35). Edited by Paul Hollander, himself one of the best chroniclers of Communism's bloody record, the book is a stark and moving tombstone for an evil system of global reach—and a severe indictment of the Left-terror regimes (e.g., China,

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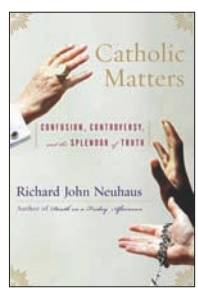
North Korea, and Cuba) that still exist.

■ A new book from Fr. Richard John Neuhaus is always cause for celebration, and ***Catholic Matters: Confusion, Controversy, and the Splendor of Truth*** (Basic, 260 pp., $25) doesn't disappoint. He is not just a fine theologian but a thoroughly engaging writer, with an eye for the charming anecdote. Here's an example:

> In my parish there is an elderly woman who really does believe in the Holy Quaternity, although she doesn't put it that way. She was much taken with, and mistaken about, a homily in which I explained why we call Mary the Mother of God. I obviously did not explain it very well, for this dear woman thanked me for confirming what she has always believed: There is no point in praying to the son when you can go directly to the mother. I no longer try very hard to correct her. God will no doubt sort out her prayers.

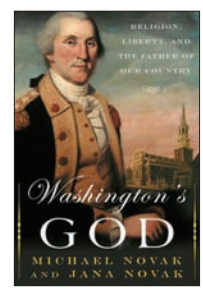
There is in this little story some truly profound wisdom: Discussions about religion sometimes give the appearance of theological IQ tests, in which the speaker's eternal destiny hinges upon the proper exegesis of certain intellectual formulas. Some of my fellow Protestants, for example, take the solid theological concept of "justification by faith" and turn it into an anti-Catholic shibboleth: Surely *Catholics* don't believe in justification by faith, if they force themselves to follow so many man-made rules? But, as Anglican theologian N. T. Wright has pointed out, "one is not justified by faith by believing in justification by faith." The woman in Fr. Neuhaus's anecdote is a case in point: Her theology is muddled, and would get a low grade if presented in a seminary term paper—but through her incoherences of mind we can discern an innocence of heart, a genuinely humble faith.



Neuhaus's generosity of spirit should not, of course, be mistaken for doctrinal latitudinarianism. He is forceful in his defense of the Catholic magisterium, and some of the most moving passages in the book describe how he came to his belief that in Catholicism he had found the fullness—the "splendor"—of truth.

There is rich theological meat in this volume, but the casual reader should not be discouraged by that fact. Many of the book's frequent pleasures are incidental, in the stories and witticisms with which Neuhaus peppers his text. (E.g.: "Father George Rutler, a noted pastor in Manhattan and a former Episcopalian, is regularly asked whether he misses anything since he became a Catholic. He just as regularly answers: 'Oh yes. I do so miss the liturgy in English.'")

Neuhaus even takes a moment to praise one of my favorite works of popular theology, one that has been almost completely forgotten. *The Church's Year of Grace* is a five-volume work, published in 1953 and long out of print, by Dr. Pius Parsch; designed as a commentary on the pre–Vatican II Catholic liturgical books, it is an eloquent source of reflections on the Christian Year. Neuhaus calls it "a winsome and deep exploration of the sanctifying of time through the Church's calendar." The world in which that book was written has passed—Neuhaus calls the set "a period piece, a curiosity, a guide to what used to be," a judgment in which he is undoubtedly correct—yet it remains fascinating and highly readable, and deserves to be back in print.



To read Neuhaus is both to meet old friends and to be continually surprised. Even a solecism can prove *ben trovato*: When he refers to people "passing through this veil [*sic*] of tears," this is surely a typo for the traditional phrase "vale [i.e., valley] of tears," from the Catholic *Salve Regina* prayer. But: Isn't it equally accurate, theologically, to see the tears as a translucent "veil" behind which the Resurrection looms? In another of his anecdotes, Neuhaus has poked fun at a Protestant clergyman who declared that "there's nothing downbeat about the cross at Crystal Cathedral"; but Neuhaus has inadvertently discovered the sense in which the minister was correct.

■ George Washington's reticence about public professions of religion has allowed historians to construct a portrait of the Founder as a deist, a skeptic, and even a modern secularist *avant la lettre*. But could this conventional picture be the latter-day equivalent of Parson Weems's pious fable about the cherry tree? In ***Washington's God: Religion, Liberty, and the Father of Our Country*** (Basic, 282 pp., $26), AEI scholar Michael Novak and his daughter, Jana Novak, lay out all the evidence—and, in doing so, construct a powerful case for the proposition that Washington was a believing Christian.

The book is persuasive chiefly because of its attention to nuance; the authors are careful to avoid claiming too much. "[Washington's] concept of God," they write, "was far more Biblical than deist. Yet it seems more Hebrew than Christian. His official words seem closer to the One God of the Hebrew Prophets and the psalmist than to the Father, Son, and Paraclete of, say, [John 14]." In referring to God, Washington often used the word "Providence"—which to most Americans today connotes something rather more abstract than a personal God who acts in history. But to Washington, Providence was not a bloodless concept of impersonal fate: It was the God who had liberated the Israelites from Egypt, and whom Washington called upon to guide his new nation. The Novaks quote some letters Washington wrote to bereaved family members and associates, and point out that he counseled submission (in their words) "not only to the *will* of Providence, but to [its] wisdom and *goodness*" as well: characteristics of a Person, not a mere force.

The authors summarize ably Washington's thought on Providence:

> History is open to human initiative, imagination, and action. . . . [Yet] Providence is sovereign over all things, of nature and of history, of the external world, and of the realm of consciousness, reflection, and choice. . . . Americans should act according to God's law in order not to turn away his favor, and in that sense to "merit" the blessings they ask, on the basis of his generous, freely granted, and undeserved promises. We do not, strictly, merit these blessings, but it would be hypocritical to ask them of God while we willfully violate his law.

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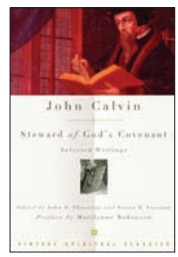
Washington's emphasis on God's sovereignty in human affairs is not surprising; the theologian who influenced colonial America more than any other was John Calvin, whose name remains to this day synonymous with predestination. In his commentary on Psalm 23, Calvin saw in David's phrase "The Lord is my shepherd" an excellent metaphor for Providence: "This [metaphor] is no mean token of [God's] tender love toward us. . . . [We] only attribute to God the office of a shepherd with due and rightful honor when we are persuaded that his Providence alone is sufficient to supply all our necessities." Is this humble dependence upon God not equally apparent in the words of the general who captured Boston in 1776? George Washington spoke of his achievement there as that of a mere "instrument in the late signal interposition of Providence." It will be objected that he may have been speaking conventionally. But, as the Novaks' fine book makes clear, there is no good reason to assume Washington was as cynical as such habitual insincerity would have required—and substantially more reason to believe that Washington had internalized much of the Christianity of his society.



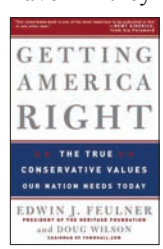
■ Calvin's commentary on Psalm 23 is included in ***John Calvin: Steward of God's Covenant: Selected Writings*** (Vintage, 417 pp., $13.95), a manageable new anthology edited by John F. Thornton and Susan B. Varenne. Conventional wisdom is assured of two things about the doctrine of predestination: a) it refers to a cruel act by a capricious and unworthy God and b) it was invented in the 16th century by John Calvin. On both counts, conventional wisdom is unjust; in this anthology, the reader will get a fuller picture of the Geneva Reformer's thought. Calvin's predestination was the intellectual progenitor of, and indeed closely akin to, George Washington's Providence: the solicitousness for His creatures of a personal yet holy and inscrutable God. And Calvin believed in this kind of God not because such a conclusion appeared plausible, as a result of human syllogizing, but chiefly because it seemed to account best for the data in the Bible.

The issue of how God's absolute sovereignty can coexist with empirical evidences of human choice is still a central one for theology; Calvin remains one of the most brilliant, and valuable, thinkers to have wrestled with it. **NR**

■ BOOKS IN BRIEF ■

Getting America Right: The True Conservative Values Our Nation Needs Today, by Edwin J. Feulner and Doug Wilson (Crown Forum, 231 pp., $26.95)

It's a frustrating time for conservatives. Although Republicans have held the reins of the federal government for the past half-decade, the beast has only grown bigger—and at an accelerating rate. Too many Beltway Republicans have acquiesced in this shameful status quo; in *Getting America Right*, Ed Feulner and Doug Wilson issue a clarion call for a renewed assault against the waste, corruption, and soul-sapping inefficiency of the federal bureaucracy. They outline a series of concrete reforms to cut through the current deadlock, including earmark disclosures, the line-item veto, mandatory sunset provisions for appropriations bills, and accounting-practice revisions that would take into account the staggering mass of unfunded liabilities that Congress has created. But they also acknowledge there is no silver bullet: A serious shift in Washington's political culture will require more voters both to embrace conservative principles and to hold their elected officials accountable on that score. This process is, and will remain, a marathon; Feulner and Wilson have made an admirable effort at inching it along.



—ANTHONY DICK

■ FILM ■

The Capital Burns

ROSS G. DOUTHAT

Washington is Hollywood for ugly people, the saying goes, which is probably why it's so hard for Hollywood to get Washington quite right: The two cities are like fraternal twins, similar but not quite the same, and the devil always lurks in the details. Filmmakers tend to take the nation's capital much too seriously (see, for instance, the limp cinéma vérité of HBO's *K Street*), succumb to *Syriana*-style conspiracy theorizing, or simply throw up their hands and produce chest-thumping left-wing agitprop like *The West Wing* or *The Contender*. As for comedy, the less said the better: You have to understand a place before you can satirize it, and so what passes for political satire is usually just a jokey premise—Chris Rock runs for president! Reese Witherspoon takes Capitol Hill!—with a few Barbra Streisand talking points thrown in for ballast.

Thank You for Smoking, an adaptation of Christopher Buckley's novel, is a cut above this sorry crop—not least because, well, it's an adaptation of a Christopher Buckley novel. The premise alone puts every previous D.C. comedy to shame: The film is a Lobbyist's Progress, with Big Tobacco shill Nick Naylor (Aaron Eckhart) smooth-talking his way through a neo-Puritan world. Eckhart has a shark's grin and the boyish smarm of a man who's spent his life getting away with murder; he's an idealized, sexed-up version of the inside-the-Beltway player—which is to say, the guy that Jack Abramoff and every other K Street wannabe desperately wanted to be. And he's up against a host of other idealized types: his glory-hogging boss (a bellowing J. K. Simmons), who made his bones in the hardscrabble world

Mr. Douthat is an associate editor at *The Atlantic Monthly*, and the author of *Privilege: Harvard and the Education of the Ruling Class*.

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of cigarette vending machines; a goo-goo senator from Vermont (William H. Macy, doing his usual milquetoast bit) who wants to slap a death's head on cigarette packs; and a femme fatale investigative reporter, repeatedly described in the film as a busty bombshell and played, inexplicably, by Katie Holmes.

Throw in a deadpan Rob Lowe as a Hollywood superagent eager to put cigarettes back on the big screen ("Indiana Jones meets Jerry Maguire . . . on two packs a day"); Robert Duvall as a mint-julep-slurping tobacco baron who takes Naylor under his wing; Sam Elliott as the Marlboro Man, now dying of lung cancer and out for blood (or at least blood money); Naylor's "MOD squad" pals (as in "merchants of death") from the booze and firearms industries, who compare annual death tolls over power lunches; and you have a film that would have to work hard *not* to be funny. And while first-time director Jason Reitman (son of Ivan, of *Stripes* and *Ghostbusters* fame) has rejiggered the novel's narrative, he's wisely kept most of the best lines intact, while showing a flair for quick visual gags: Lowe's Japan-obsessed superagent decked out in a kimono during a late-night call; Naylor unconscious, covered in nicotine patches, and draped seminude over Abraham Lincoln's statue on the Washington Mall by anti-smoking fanatics.

The movie is so breezy, in fact, so charming and perfectly cast (the Holmes puzzler aside), and everyone seems to be having such a good time that it feels almost uncharitable to point out the film's main weakness: the unexpected and unwelcome *niceness*. Buckley's novel isn't that vicious, as satires go: It doesn't offer the kind of unfiltered misanthropy that you get from Mark Twain or Ambrose Bierce, say. But it's tart and worldly-wise, drained of sentiment and mercifully free of the kind of mourning-over-lost-innocence that pervades too many American political novels, from *All the King's Men* to *Primary Colors*. But somewhere during the transition from book to screen, someone (a nervous studio head, perhaps?) seems to have fretted that audiences wouldn't line up to watch a tobacco lobbyist scramble and dissemble his way through a corrupt and self-righteous Washington, D.C. And so *Thank You for Smoking* acquired . . . the Adorable Kid.

In the book, Naylor's son is kept safely offstage; in the movie, he's front and center. And you know what's going to happen as soon as he shows up—given corporeal form by Cameron Bright, who usually plays creepy tykes (a clone in *Godsend*, Nicole Kidman's reincarnated husband in *Birth*) but who seems to have mastered the mix of hope, naivety, and secret sorrow that every Adorable Kid needs to carry with him. You know he'll be a child of divorce who's embarrassed by Naylor and somewhat estranged from him; you know that Naylor will take the Kid with him on various excursions (to Hollywood, to the Marlboro Man's house); you know that the two will gradually grow closer, and that Dad will nearly blow it but pull things together in the end, learning a Big Lesson just in time for a stirring, "I'm-so-proud-of-you-Pop" finale.

To Reitman's credit, it's not as bad as it sounds on the page: Naylor's cynicism stays largely intact throughout, and there are some sharp moments amid the predictable father-son bonding. ("My mommy says cigarettes kill," a pigtailed goody-two-shoes tells Naylor when he shows up for his son's career day. "Well, your mommy doesn't sound like a credible medical expert," he shoots back.) The compulsively spinning tobacco lobbyist does become a truth-teller by the end, but at least the Big Lesson that the Adorable Kid helps him learn isn't that Smoking Is Bad. If anything, this film is actually *more* pro-smoking than Buckley's novel—perhaps because the book came out a decade ago, when the anti-smoking crusade hadn't yet reached the doors of your neighborhood pub.

But a more libertarian Big Lesson is still a lesson, and by the time Naylor finds himself in front of a Senate subcommittee, speaking truth to power with his son looking on, it's clear that *Thank You for Smoking* hasn't quite broken free of the Hollywood-goes-to-Washington mold. Naylor's D.C. is an entertaining place to visit, but the real city is still awaiting its close-up—and a filmmaker brave enough to realize that great satire doesn't need a message, or a profile in courage, or an Adorable Kid. **NR**

FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

ON FIRE

If all I'd ever seen in life
Were the oaks on fire, their predawn
Darkness suddenly into flame,
Glowing leaves a testament
To what the sun need not explain,
Then like the ancient lawgiver
Who brought the tablets down into the plain,
I would have had enough of seeing
And would have known without this pain
All that is required of the living,
All that is knowable of your Name.

—OLIVIA ELLIS SIMPSON

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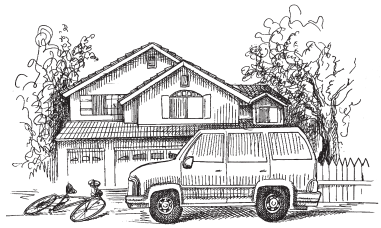
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

The Year That Was



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

News of the death of Jack Profumo the other day had the same effect on me as the scent of a cookie famously had on one of Marcel Proust's characters. The years fell away, and I was, in imagination, back in the mother country at the time of the Profumo scandal. "Sexual intercourse began / In nineteen sixty-three," observed Philip Larkin. I don't know about that; but for early British Boomers like myself, a great many other things began in or about that year.

Politics, for example. I had been aware of politics in childhood, but only as a sort of incomprehensible game that adults played. National elections had appeared to me a matter of cars going busily back and forth in our street, each car identifying its party affiliation by either a red or a blue window sticker. We did not often see so many cars, since no one in our street owned one and the street itself led nowhere. These Election Day vehicles belonged to party supporters from better-off neighborhoods. They made themselves available to ferry voters to the polls. We kids sat on our front walls like so many NASCAR fans, watching the cars race to and fro, cheering our parents' party and hissing at the other. My father, who loathed trade unions and Communists, looked down on the colored races, and thought the country would go better if it were run by a board of successful businessmen, was of course a Labour party voter, and so I cheered the red-stickered cars and hissed at the blues. (This was before the colors got reversed by a faulty computer program, or its history-illiterate programmer, in the 2000 U.S. presidential campaign.)

By 1963, the year I left home to go to university in London, I had attained a higher level of understanding. Something was rotten in the state of Britain, I perceived, and I felt pretty sure I knew where the problem lay. Too much power was in the hands of old-school-tie cliques, of the wealthy and privileged, of the entrenched upper classes, of Throne and Altar. The nation needed something brisker, more up-to-date, more *efficient*, less cobwebbed and tradition-bound. It was so obvious! I was, in short, a prototype Tony Blair: I believed that Britain needed re-branding.

The Profumo scandal seemed to validate all that. Here were the smug, corrupt elites in all their decadence. The roots of the scandal went back two years, to the moment in the summer of 1961 when a 19-year-old showgirl named Christine Keeler had emerged naked from the pool at Lord Astor's country house into the gaze of Jack Profumo, an old-school-tie type who held the splendid, now alas defunct, title of Secretary of State for War. Profumo was smitten, and an affair ensued. Unfortunately one of the other names on Ms. Keeler's dance card was Eugene Ivanov, an attaché at the Soviet embassy. British Military Intelligence got wind of both affairs and warned Profumo to stop seeing Ms. Keeler. Profumo dutifully stopped. Rumors gradually leaked out, however, and Profumo spent the second quarter of 1963 insisting to his government colleagues and to the House of Commons that there had been no affair. At last he confessed his lie and resigned from public life; this happened in the middle of that year, just as I was finishing my secondary education.

It was all of a piece with much else that had been happening, with the beginning of the changes encompassed by the title of Peter Hitchens's book *The Abolition of Britain*. If the hapless Jack Profumo represented the old, decadent, don't-alarm-the-servants establishment on the way out, Christine Keeler was a harbinger of the celebrity culture to come, in which individuals of no gifts or accomplishments attained extraordinary fame. Taking the long view, I am inclined to think, like Peter Hitchens, that the older dispensation was the better one. At the time, though, we believed ourselves to be engaged in asserting ancient liberties. We did not deign to notice that the establishment we loathed was as keen on those liberties as we were. Freedom from compulsory military service, for example, had been restored in 1960, to the great glee of my sister's boyfriends, three or four years older than I. Jack Profumo had in fact overseen the transition from a conscript military to a volunteer one, and had done so with such skill and imagination he has as much claim as anyone to be called the father of the modern British armed forces.

Much of what was happening first became visible as humor. The subversive tendencies in British society had always found humorous outlets; now the subversion was as naked and brazen as the young Ms. Keeler stepping out of Lord Astor's pool. A TV show named *That Was The Week That Was*, aired late on Saturday nights, openly poked fun at established institutions. The satirical magazine *Private Eye* had embarked on its long campaign against good taste and the laws of libel. From across the Atlantic wafted occasional strains of American irreverence: Mort Sahl, Tom Lehrer. A few of the more avant-garde of us knew the name Lenny Bruce, though I don't recall hearing any of his material until much later. The Profumo affair made its own contributions to the rising tide of disrespectful jollity: Ms. Keeler had just got undressed for bed when the cabinet fell on her, etc., etc. (Though the true comic muse of the affair turned out to be Ms. Keeler's perky Welsh companion in vice, Mandy Rice-Davies, who, when told that Lord Astor had denied any acquaintance with her, uttered the immortal response: "Well, he would, wouldn't he?" Just as quotable, though less well-known, was Mandy's pithy *apologia pro vita sua* made some decades later: "My life has been one long descent into respectability.")

John Profumo did extraordinary penance for his one lapse. Soon after resigning, he showed up at a charitable foundation serving the poor and homeless Cockneys of London's East End. They set him to menial chores; but he soon became one of the foundation's most able organizers and fundraisers. This rock of what one of his fellow trustees called "the old, decent, Tory virtues" worked for the charity into his late eighties, while Britain metamorphosed all around him into a nation where those virtues counted for nothing. Nowadays the East End is populated mainly by Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh. Christine Keeler is 64. **NR**

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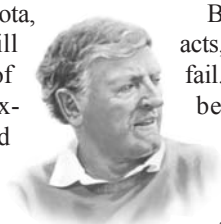
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

South Dakota's Monkey Wrench

NEW YORK, MARCH 7

THERE is furtive glee in the eyes of such as Nancy Keenan, president of NARAL Pro-Choice America. The reason for it is that she calculates that the effrontery of South Dakota's legislature will bring on massive retaliation by the Supreme Court.

Chinese vigilantes rejoiced a few weeks ago when a group of dissenters published a call for diminished censorship. They were confident about what would happen, and it did: Beijing brought on reinvigorated party-line censorship. Ms. Keenan and some of her followers in NARAL Pro-Choice America figure that what South Dakota has done will compel the Supreme Court to act—and perhaps in such a way as to smash the little signs of life in the pro-life moment which, in South Dakota, gave rise to regicidal inclinations.



The governor of South Dakota, Michael Rounds, signed a bill that would outlaw the practice of abortion except in certain extreme cases. In signing, he said things which, a generation ago, would have been thought too routine to notice but today are fighting words. "The true test of a civilization," he said, "is how well people treat the most vulnerable and most helpless in their society. The sponsors and supporters of this bill believe that abortion is wrong because unborn children are the most vulnerable and most helpless persons in our society. I agree with them."

Jumping Jupiter!

Here in three sentences the governor of South Dakota tramples on the neck of cherished modern icons. To begin with, he refers to a fetus as a "child." He refers to "unborn children" as "helpless." Again, they are "persons." And he invokes the heart of civilized society to give them succor.

The bill outlawing abortion restores to South Dakota a ban that until 1973 had been the law in almost every state of the union. In the years since then, various states and various jurisdictions have sought to refine the right to abort. The South Dakota law could be the springboard to the direct reversal of *Roe*. But it is thought by many abortion supporters that this totalist challenge, posed by South Dakota, will necessarily be met by a totalist reendorsement of *Roe* by the Supreme Court.

The choicers count five members of the Supreme Court who are publicly committed in favor of *Roe* v. *Wade*. They have this fear, that a sitting member of the Court will retire in the period immediately ahead, when the incumbent president is still there to nominate a successor. That would mean five votes, counting Roberts and Alito as dormant dissenters from *Roe*, who would, in the nightmare scenario, renounce the 1973 decision as forcefully as the Court, in *Brown* v. *Board of Education* in 1954, renounced the segregation authorized by *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* in 1896.

But assume that before the Court acts, injunctions against the new law fail. Assume, then, that there would be a period in which, in South Dakota, women could not get an abortion. What would they do? Well, of course, there is the alternative that they could bear the child whose life they had brought on. But if that alternative were excluded, what then?

Someone seeking relief could go north to North Dakota, or south to Nebraska. Or east to Minnesota, or west to Wyoming. We are talking about bus rides.

We are very much driven, in modern days, by the democratic imperative. Well, the people of South Dakota have expressed themselves on a political question, resolving that unborn life is life notwithstanding. And they hold high what they deem, in their governor's words, their dedication to stand by "the most vulnerable and most helpless persons in our society."

Ports Without a Home

NEW YORK, MARCH 10

ANALYSIS of the aborted ports deal begins and ends with political questions. Vin Weber, former congressman and now a lobbyist for the emirates, acknowledged that public pressure in the matter was "unprecedented" in his experience. Mr. Weber had for several days been counseling Dubai to back off from the deal, and signals were buzzing about in the capital at a feverish rate.

On Thursday, the climactic day, everyone in Washington was bound to or from the White House, the Senate, the Department of Homeland Security, or to a TV talk show . . . when, suddenly, the calm voice of the sheik came across. Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, emir of Dubai, said in effect: "Look, if you people want so bad to operate the ports we took over from Peninsular & Oriental in Great Britain, well, go ahead. Round up a few American capitalists who want to buy us out for the $6.8 billion we were willing to pay."

President Bush was understandably indignant at the suggestion that he was indifferent to U.S. security. Ironically, when word got out that the White House hadn't even been aware of the pending deal until late last month, critics rushed to the conclusion that here was evidence of presidential insouciance. But it wasn't that. It was evidence that the machinery of government was humming along, everyone doing his duty.

John Negroponte, director of national intelligence, had surveilled the proposed sale and found no objection to it. The Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States, an interagency committee that passes judgment on foreign acquisitions, had approved the shift. The Coast Guard was unconcerned.

There was nothing inherently wrong with the deal, and the president's involvement became purely political. House majority leader John Boehner said it in so many words: "House Republicans were obligated to take action to respond to the concerns Americans have expressed about the proposed deal." This is different

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from saying that Congress had to act to ensure national security. The American public was almost overnight induced to be edgy about a deal that would give administrative control in six major port facilities to a company in effect owned by a remote Islamic emirate.

If the matter had proceeded normally, attention would have been given to other questions. Is there a flat rule against selling port facilities to companies that operate under foreign flags? Since the ports in question were being operated by a British company, such a prohibition would have been new. That does not mean it would have been irrational, because it might be persuasively contended that in an age in which terrorist leverage is especially to be guarded against, what was okay under the rule of free trade is no longer okay.

Critics of the Dubai deal have pointed out that only a small amount of commerce is actually examined at our ports of entry and that this must be reformed. The reform could of course take place irrespective of who owns the port facilities. How incoming goods are examined is something left to Customs and Coast Guard and security forces. And these agencies would operate under rules that would not change whether the owner of the port was foreign or American.

Yet the mere feel of port facilities owned by a) foreigners, b) a despot kingdom, c) Muslims, d) sitting there in the Persian Gulf a stone's throw from Iran . . . Well, Americans aren't isolationists, but too much is too much.

The White House recognized *force majeure*. The president did not repeat his threat to veto congressional intervention in the deal. The 62–2 vote in the House Appropriations Committee, the 70 percent opposed in the CBS News poll, carried the day. And it was manifestly a relief to the White House that the deal was aborted without a political showdown, which the president would have lost.

Will there be bad blood? Yes, even though the emir isn't likely to lose a great deal from properties that have depreciated in virtue of this round of capital immobility. There is, also, the matter of pride. The U.S. diplomatic apparatus will look for opportunities to say pleasant things about Dubai, and the emir will be consoled by the strategic satisfactions of continuing to engage in commerce with the West.

Milosevic Cheats Death

NEW YORK, MARCH 14

THE inside story: The date was October 15, 1946. The Nazi war criminals would be hanged the next day. It was an event so momentous that the president of United Press announced to his staff in New York City that he personally would superintend the story from UP's central office in the *Daily News* building. He shoved the pros to one side, donned a green eyeshade, and sat over his Teletype. The 10-bell sign went off, indicating a story of the first magnitude. He got the news and typed out a headline for UP's 5,400 subscribers worldwide. It read: "GOERING CHEATS DEATH BY COMMITTING SUICIDE."

Fifty-four hundred varieties of snickers and derision poured in from offices around the world. The president doffed his green eyeshade and returned silently to his administrative quarters, leaving the news cockpit to the regular night editor.

There was fury in Nuremberg over what happened. Goering was by far the most conspicuous of the captured Nazis. It had been a very long trial, almost a year from arraignments to executions. There were 21 defendants, and the sentences were varied, including three acquittals. There was plenty to do the next day to keep the hangman busy, but Hermann Goering had ruined the party.

An effort was made to immure in the confines of Spandau Prison the news of Goering's outsmarting his jailers, but the word got out, and what was feared indeed happened: There was quiet celebration by vanquished Germans inclined to ignore the crime and daydream of the glories of the Third Reich, whose last surviving grandee had had the last laugh at the expense of the hangman.

Slobodan Milosevic didn't cheat death by committing suicide, or by contriving to weaken mortally his health, but he certainly removed such satisfaction as was owed to mourners for the 250,000 people killed in the former Yugoslavia owing substantially to Milosevic and the Serbian terrorism he mobilized.

The day in 2001 when Milosevic was turned over to an international tribunal for trial was exhilarating for hundreds of thousands. Briefly it appeared that the international court in The Hague would provide such satisfaction as could be had from establishing formal guilt. Not the kind of satisfaction that Nuremberg brought, because the code in The Hague forbade capital punishment. The prosecutors' job was to establish Milosevic's guilt and to give him a life sentence in jail.

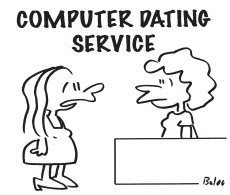
Upon his death, the prosecutor passed out word that she had expected the case against Milosevic to be successfully concluded within two months. We cannot know whether that might have happened. Or whether Milosevic could have protracted his trial another four years. His position was simple: He was president of Serbia, the court had no jurisdiction over him, and he would refuse to cooperate in any pantomime of a genuine trial.

There isn't a great deal a prosecution can do if the defendant is entirely inert. Milosevic was not inactive to the point of absenting himself from the proceedings. Day after day, month after month, year after year, he ranted on, presenting irrelevant documents and seizing the histrionic moment to reiterate his defiance.

But the failure to convict him, let alone to hang him, contributes that attenuation to political crime which has permitted prime-time murderers to leave the stage unimpeded by basic requirements to observe international law, to desist from genocide, to fear epochal transgressions against civilized behavior.

It has been instantly conceded in foreign dispatches that Milosevic has now become a martyr. A martyr, no less!—even as Goering was thought a martyr. But at least Goering's death was brought on by successful prosecution, even if the consummation was denied us, Goering swinging from a rope, rather than dying, as Milosevic has done, from drugs that killed him, drugs that, on the dramatic stage, played the role of impostors.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



"I'm tired of dating bad boys—do you have any bad men?"

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

The Most Wrecked People on Earth

If I were a Palestinian, I'd occasionally wonder what I had to do to get a bad press.

Elect a terrorist government explicitly committed to the destruction of Israel? No, no, no, don't jump to conclusions, explains Bill Clinton. It's just a vote for better municipal services.

Send my daughter to explode in an Israeli restaurant? Oh, well, shrug the experts, it's an act born of "desperation" and "frustration." You have to remember Palestinians don't have any tanks, so they have to make do with what the mayor of London's favorite imam calls "the children bomb."

So the events of March 14th are no surprise. Under something called the 2002 Ramallah Agreement, various Palestinian prisoners were being held at a jail in Jericho under the supervision of American and British monitors. The jailbirds were wanted by Israel for the murder of a cabinet minister in 2001, but in order to keep "the peace process" "on track" Ariel Sharon had been prevailed upon to agree to this carefully brokered international agreement permitting the men to remain under the care of the Palestinian Authority.

Then Hamas gets elected and decides it's not going to honor this agreement and, with the prisoners' day of liberation at hand, things get a bit sticky at the jail for the Anglo-American supervisors.

So one Tuesday the British team on duty tell the Palestinians they're off to get the car fixed, and no sooner have they gone than an Israeli team swoop in, seize the men, and announce they'll be tried back in the Zionist Entity. When the Palestinian locals find out, they react in the usual way—torching the British Council offices in Gaza, etc.

Back in London, the media were outraged. At the Brits, that is. The *Guardian*'s Seumas Milne blamed foreign secretary Jack Straw for "the humiliation of the Palestinian president" and "the undermining of efforts to form a viable Palestinian administration" and "the seizure of an elected political leader regarded by many Palestinians as a national hero." On this last point, Mr. Milne conceded, sotto voce, that Ahmad Saadat was wanted for murder, but the murder in question was only that of an Israeli "racist cabinet minister." Anyway, after this episode, "Britain cannot plausibly be regarded as an honest broker in the region." Which must be bewildering to Her Majesty's Government, which under Mr. Blair has been only marginally less of a dishonest broker than the unashamedly pro-Palestinian Continentals.

ABBAS MOMANI/AFP

The assumptions behind press coverage of the "Middle East peace process" make a fascinating study. On one hand, we're told that the Palestinians "deserve" a state (which is a decadent postmodern concept of sovereignty: The United States doesn't exist because the colonists "deserved" a state but because they went out and fought for one). On the other hand, everything they do makes clear that they're absolutely undeserving and are incapable of operating one. It was Hamas who decided to abrogate unilaterally the Ramallah Agreement, but needless to say no blame attaches to the Palestinians for this or any other infraction.

At the time of his death, for example, "President" Yasser Arafat was in something like the tenth year of his five-year term of office, yet Europeans still complained that, in the words of Sir Simon Jenkins, "America refused to acknowledge Yasser Arafat as a democrat." As for the female suicide bomber who tried to blow up the Israeli hospital whose doctors had treated her, and the new Hamas Member of Parliament best known for her inspirational video in which she instructs her remaining children (three of six having self-detonated) how to kill Jews, and all the other exemplars of Palestinian "nationalism," each new depravity by definition only proves how terrible the Israelis must be to drive people to such things.

Maybe. But it would seem more likely that, insofar as anything "drives" you to child sacrifice, it's being absolved of all responsibility for one's actions, and being treated like a child oneself for 60 years. The Palestinian people are the acme of internationalism—that's to say, they're the only people on the face of the earth with their own U.N. agency, and, after six decades in their care, they are now the most comprehensively wrecked people on the face of the earth.

They didn't get that way by accident. Way back when, hard as it is to recall, they were a reasonably conventional ethnocultural movement promoted in relatively conventional ways—by the tanks and jets of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, etc. But the region's thugs eventually figured out that Western indulgence of Palestinian depravity was more effective than the crack troops of Glubb Pasha's Arab Legion could ever be.

I wonder how far they can push that. After the London bombings, the city's wretched mayor, Ken Livingstone, found himself having to explain why suicide bombing on Israeli buses is a legitimate act but suicide bombing on Piccadilly buses isn't. The old joke about British Palestine was that it was the twice-promised land: Hence, today a Western democracy and a disaffected Muslim population exist in two solitudes on the same piece of real estate.

But doesn't that sum up Europe, too? And what happens when, say, Iran starts spreading a little terror startup money through France and the Netherlands the way they've done in Lebanon and Gaza? What would it take to persuade a European Muslim to blow himself up in an Amsterdam gay bar? Given the changes in the nature of Palestinian "resistance" these last 20 years, that's a question Europeans ought to be asking. In one of history's better jests, in the remaking of the Continent they're the new Jews. **NR**

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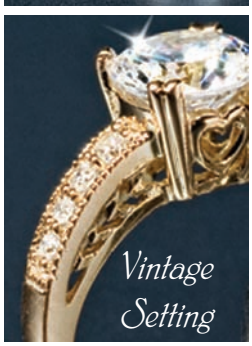

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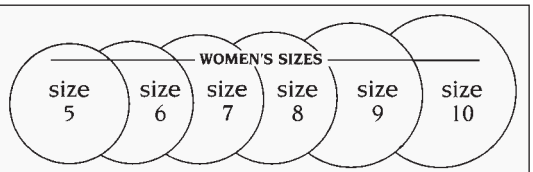

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In the new issue of *Policy Review*

Of Power and Providence

The old United States and the new European Union

The European reaction to the unbridled use of U.S. power in George W. Bush's first term was one of both defiance and cooperation, and it will probably retain a mixed character. It would be churlish for Europe to refuse cooperation in matters where Europe also has an important stake, such as common action against terrorism, but this eminently reasonable attitude limits any attempt to impose linkage.... Alongside this, however, the European refusal to do the dishes after the Americans made their unilateral meal in Iraq was a form of defiance and one that had a significant impact.... Even when European governments have wanted good relations with America, the sheer unpopularity and felt illegitimacy of the American effort constrained their ability to offer troops. European publics do not warm to the idea of taxation without representation, and their attitude has been registered in the conduct of their governments. Here, at least, Europe's democratic deficit is not so large after all.

—David C. Hendrickson

Literature in Theory

Bad theory, that is

To reconcile Theory's affirmation of the radical indeterminacy of texts with its claim that such indeterminacy generates an emancipatory and typically egalitarian political program, one would have to suspend the ordinary laws of reason—recognized, contrary to Theory's extreme pronouncements, not only in the West but around the globe and from time immemorial. If texts are all there is and the world is nothing but a text, if moral and political standards like everything else are constructed and not discovered, why shouldn't the strong and ruthless regard themselves as emancipated to rewrite other people's lives in whatever ways strike their fancy and they can get away with?

—Peter Berkowitz

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